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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

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A HISTORICAL SUMMARY  
OF  
STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN  
IN  
MASSACHUSETTS



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## FOREWORD

This publication is intended for students of public-welfare administration who wish to understand the development of State welfare programs. Several States were studied, and the report for each State is being issued separately.

Material changes have occurred during the past few years in organization and services in Massachusetts but the present program has developed from past experience. It is believed that this report of the development of State services for children will be of value to students of the subject. The picture given is of Massachusetts in the spring of 1934 at the time an extended field visit was made to the State, and it should not be understood to represent the present situation.



# A Historical Summary of State Services for Children in Massachusetts

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## THE STATE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

Massachusetts, although forty-fourth among the States in land area, ranked eighth in population in 1930. According to the 1930 census the population of the State was 4,249,614, or 528.6 persons per square mile. Only Rhode Island and New Jersey exceeded Massachusetts in density of population. The State is distinctly urban. It includes nine cities of more than 100,000 population and seven other cities of more than 50,000 population. The census classifies only 10 percent of the population as rural and only 2 percent as rural-farm. The population is predominantly white (99 percent); 74 percent is native white, although only 34 percent of the population was born of native white parents. Until nearly the end of the eighteenth century the population was unusually homogeneous, but with the introduction of manufacturing there was an influx of immigrants. Immigration continued for many years, the Irish and the Italians coming in the greatest numbers, with the result that the composition of the population has changed materially.

Massachusetts is one of the richest States of the Union, its estimated wealth in 1930 amounting to \$3,144 per capita.<sup>1</sup> In 1931 the State ranked fifth in the number of wage earners in manufacturing industries and seventh in the value of manufactured products. The State has since its early days been a leader in the textile industry, and this is still the foremost industry of the State, although there are also important shoe factories and tanneries, foundries and machine shops, electric-equipment works, paper mills, and printing and publishing houses. In 1931 the United States biennial census of manufactures reported 9,305 manufacturing establishments with 434,440 wage earners. The wages of the employees for the year amounted to \$474,189,000 and the value of the manufactured products to \$2,157,450,000.<sup>2</sup>

The constitution was adopted in 1780 before the State officially entered the Union and is the oldest of all State constitutions still in force.<sup>3</sup> There had been 71 amendments to the constitution up to January 1, 1933. The Governor and other elected State officials serve for a 2-year term, and the legislature has an annual session. A council to advise the Governor in the executive part of the government was provided for in the constitution. The council is made up of eight persons in addition to the Lieutenant Governor. These councilors are elected from eight districts, each composed of five contiguous

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<sup>1</sup> Conference Board Bulletin [National Industrial Conference Board], No. 62 (February 20, 1932), p. 496.

<sup>2</sup> Biennial Census of Manufactures, 1931, p. 1223. U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 181 (September 1935), pp. 184-187.

senatorial districts. The Governor is responsible for calling the council together to discuss the general affairs of the Commonwealth.<sup>4</sup> One of the primary duties of the council has been to approve all appointments made by the Governor.

The number of divisions and departments in the State government gradually increased until more than 100 were in existence. As a result a reorganization of the State government was authorized by an act of the 1919 legislature, which became effective December 1, 1919. By this act the State agencies were reorganized into 20 departments. The general executive and administrative functions of the State, except those directly under the Governor or under the Governor and the council, were placed in four departments headed by constitutional elective officers; namely, department of the State secretary, department of the State treasurer, department of the State auditor, and department of the attorney general. In addition the following 16 specialized departments were created by the act: Civil service and registration, corporations and taxation, education, public works, public health, public welfare, mental diseases, corrections, agriculture, conservation, public safety, labor and industries, industrial accidents, public utilities, banking and insurance, and the metropolitan district commission.<sup>5</sup>

Local government in Massachusetts has been conducted on the "town" or township basis since early in the history of the State. There are 316 towns in Massachusetts, of which 247 have populations of under 6,000. The addition of 39 cities to the towns gives the State 355 local governmental units.<sup>6</sup>

Town government as it functions in Massachusetts and a few other New England States is carried on by an assembly (town meeting) of the qualified voters resident within the town. At least one town meeting is held each year, and additional meetings are called when necessary. The assembly has the power to elect officials and to pass legislation. It chooses the selectmen and the committees, approves their accounts, and makes the tax levy for the following year in accordance with the need as presented by the committees. Its powers cover the management of town lands and other property and all local matters, including police protection and sanitation. Because the open town meeting proved unwieldy for some of the larger towns, provision has been made for the adoption of a limited town-meeting plan. A number of towns have adopted this arrangement, under which the town is divided into precincts, and each precinct elects representatives to the town meeting to conduct the town's business. Only these delegates have the right to vote, but any resident of the town has the right to speak at the meeting.<sup>7</sup>

The executive authority of a town consists of three or five selectmen who serve for terms of 1 or 3 years.

The selectmen may be called the general administrative board of the town. But they differ from county boards in having no authority to levy taxes, and their powers are limited to those conferred by statute or the town meeting.

<sup>4</sup> Constitution, ch. II, secs. I-III, amendments, acts XVI, LXIV.

<sup>5</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, chs. 6-28.

<sup>6</sup> Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol. 1, Population, pp. 497-508. Washington, 1931.

<sup>7</sup> Fairlie, John A., and Charles N. Kneier: *County Government and Administration*, pp. 430-434. Century Co., New York, 1930.

Their functions are manifold and vary from town to town. They issue warrants for holding a town meeting; they lay out highways and drains; they grant licenses; they make arrangements for elections; and they have charge of the town property. They may act as assessors, overseers of the poor, and health officers. They appoint some minor town officers, and can fill vacancies in most of the elective town offices. They adjust claims against the town and draw orders on the treasurer for payment.<sup>8</sup>

There is also the town clerk, who attends to all details of elections, keeps the records and the minutes of the town meetings, and generally serves also as registrar of births, marriages, and deaths, as treasurer, assessor, and tax collector, and performs such other minor duties as the town demands. Each town also has certain elected officers, the number of which vary in the different towns. Some of these officers are paid a salary; others receive only the fees paid for their actual services.

The administrative plan for cities differs from that of towns, as each city is authorized to select one of several forms of government.<sup>9</sup> Four possible plans are set forth in the statutes. Under plan A government is by the mayor and a city council composed of nine persons elected from the city at large. Under plan B government is by the mayor, elected from the city at large, and a council composed of 11 persons in cities that have not more than 7 wards and 15 persons in cities that have more than 7 wards, one member to be elected from each ward and the remaining members of the council to be elected from the city at large. Under plan C government is by a council composed of five members: The mayor, who serves as commissioner of administration, and four commissioners—of finance, health, public works, and public property—all elected from the city at large. Under plan D government is by the mayor, elected from the city at large, a city council of four members, elected by the people, and a city manager, appointed by the council.<sup>10</sup>

Welfare services are the responsibility of a local board of public welfare composed of three or five members who serve for a term of 1 or 3 years, unless the town votes to authorize its selectmen to act as the board. To this board is delegated the administration of relief in the towns, including aid to dependent children, outdoor relief, and institutional care. The duties of the board of public welfare were administered by "overseers of the poor" prior to 1927, when new legislation gave these officers a more modern appellation.<sup>11</sup> The board of public welfare may appoint a paid secretary who need not be one of its members, a plan which makes it possible for the board to have professional assistance.<sup>12</sup> This had been done, however, only by some of the larger towns.

The 14 counties of the State are in the main judicial districts to which judges are appointed by the Governor for life terms. In each county except Nantucket and Suffolk, three county commissioners are elected, who are salaried officials and have the management of county buildings, such as courthouses and prisons, with power to

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 435.

<sup>9</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 41, sec. 1; ch. 43, secs. 1-13.

<sup>10</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 43, secs. 1, 50-92.

<sup>11</sup> Laws of 1927, ch. 165.

<sup>12</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 41, secs. 1, 31-34; chs. 117-118A.

lay out new highways from town to town, to estimate the amount of taxation needed to defray county charges, and to apportion the county tax among the towns and cities by which it is to be levied.<sup>13</sup>

Only to this extent has the county authority any power over the towns. There is no county council or other assembly with legislative functions.

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<sup>13</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 34, secs. 4-8, 14.

## DEVELOPMENT OF STATE WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

The earliest State provision in Massachusetts, as in other States, for the care of delinquent, dependent, and physically and mentally handicapped persons was institutional. Hospitals for the insane, the first of which was established in 1834,<sup>14</sup> and the State schools for delinquent boys and for delinquent girls established in 1847 and 1854<sup>15</sup> were placed under the administration of boards of trustees for each institution, who appointed the superintendent of the institution. The plan of administration of the three State almshouses and the paupers' hospital established in 1852 included the appointment of the superintendents by the Governor, who also appointed a board of three inspectors for each institution, each inspector to be paid \$100 a year.<sup>16</sup> State responsibility for care of blind, deaf, and mentally subnormal children was discharged by annual grants from the State treasury to privately controlled institutions caring for these groups.<sup>17</sup>

By the middle of the nineteenth century State expenditures for the care of aliens and dependent persons who had no legal settlement in the cities or towns of the Commonwealth became a problem. A board of alien commissioners was created to supervise the operation of all laws relating to the introduction of aliens into the Commonwealth and relating to the support of State paupers. The board was composed of a member of the State council, the auditor of State accounts, and the superintendent of alien passengers of Boston. The commissioners were authorized to appoint persons to inspect all almshouses in which State paupers were kept and therefore had a limited supervisory authority over the State almshouses, which cared for the majority of the State poor. The commissioners were also responsible for obtaining information about aliens coming or brought into the State, and, if such aliens became dependent, for obtaining their support or removal by persons responsible.<sup>18</sup>

## STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH DEPENDENCY, MENTAL DEFECT, AND MENTAL DISEASE

### BOARD OF STATE CHARITIES

Successive investigating committees appointed by the assembly of the Commonwealth emphasized the need for a more adequate plan of supervision of State institutions and control of State expenditures for persons who had no legal settlement.<sup>19</sup> In 1863, a board of State

<sup>14</sup> Laws of 1834, ch. 150.

<sup>15</sup> Laws of 1847, ch. 165; 1854, ch. 52 (Resolves); 1855, ch. 442.

<sup>16</sup> Laws of 1852, ch. 275.

<sup>17</sup> Breckinridge, Sophonisba P.: *Public Welfare Administration in the United States*, pp. 142-143. Select Documents. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927.

<sup>18</sup> Laws of 1851, ch. 342.

<sup>19</sup> Breckinridge, Sophonisba P.: *Public Welfare Administration in the United States*, pp. 123-129, 134-141, 142-148. Select Documents. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927.

charities was established, the first in the United States. The board consisted of five members appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of 5 years. Board members received no compensation for their services except their actual traveling expenses incurred in supervisory visits and in attendance at the required monthly meetings. The law gave the board the power to investigate and supervise the whole system of the public charitable and correctional institutions of the Commonwealth, and to recommend such changes and additional provisions as it deemed necessary for their economical and efficient administration.<sup>20</sup> In addition, it was given full power "to transfer pauper inmates from one charitable institution or lunatic hospital to another," and to grant admissions and discharges to such pauper inmates. The duties of the board of alien commissioners were transferred to the new board, and the general agent of State charities was authorized to perform these duties. The statute also provided a paid secretary, who, under the direction of the board, was authorized to examine the reports of cities and towns on the support of paupers and to obtain from the State institutions data that would show the causes and extent of pauperism, crime, disease, and insanity.

The noteworthy accomplishments of this board in studying social conditions and needs, in furthering constructive legislation, and in improving administrative practices in the institutions under its supervision made this type of State agency a pattern for other States, so that by 1887, 12 Eastern and Midwestern States had set up similar agencies.

#### STATE BOARD OF HEALTH, LUNACY, AND CHARITY

After 16 years of service the board of State charities was abolished, and its work became part of a more comprehensive program.<sup>21</sup> In its dealings with the State poor, the board of State charities found that it came in close contact with situations and conditions materially affecting the public health.<sup>22</sup> The desire to have an administration that would more successfully coordinate health and social problems was largely responsible for the abolition of the separate State boards of health and charity and the creation of a single board to act as commissioners of lunacy as well as to administer services relating to health and charity.

The State board of health, lunacy, and charity consisted of nine persons appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of 5 years.<sup>23</sup> To this board were transferred all the powers and duties of the board of State charities, including supervision of all State insane asylums, the State almshouse, the State workhouse, and three State schools for delinquent and dependent children. As commissioners of lunacy, the board had power to investigate the sanity and condition of any person committed to any hospital or retained elsewhere by reason of alleged insanity. The board was made responsible for visiting and inspecting every private asylum for the insane within the Commonwealth

<sup>20</sup> Laws of 1863, ch. 240.

<sup>21</sup> Laws of 1879, ch. 291.

<sup>22</sup> Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Conference of Charities held at Chicago, June 1879, p. 29. Boston, 1879.

<sup>23</sup> Laws of 1879, ch. 291.



at least once every 6 months. This was the first permanent commission of lunacy in Massachusetts.<sup>24</sup>

During the years of service of the board of State charities the State institutional program for children and dependent adults had developed. The existing boards of trustees of the institutions were abolished by the act creating the State board of health, lunacy, and charity, and new boards of trustees were appointed by the Governor.<sup>25</sup> A board of seven persons, two of whom were women, was appointed to serve as trustees of the State primary and reform schools. This board was responsible for the two schools for delinquent children and the school for dependent children, which had superseded the State almshouse at Monson and provided care for most of the dependent children who were State charges. Five persons, including two women, were appointed as the board of trustees of the State almshouse, and another board of five was created to serve as trustees of the State workhouse. These were all administrative boards and had authority to appoint the superintendent. Previously the appointment of the superintendents of the three State almshouses had been made by the Governor, the superintendents of the other institutions being appointed by the trustees.

The board of health, which was abolished with the creation of the State board of health, lunacy, and charity, had been established in 1869.<sup>26</sup> It consisted of seven persons appointed by the Governor and constituted a board of health and vital statistics. It was its duty to take cognizance of the interests of health and life among the citizens of the Commonwealth, to make sanitary investigations, and to study the causes of disease, sources of mortality, and the effects of localities, employments, conditions, and circumstances on the public health. This was the first State board of health in the United States.<sup>27</sup> After 1879, the health functions of the State board developed to such an extent that in 1886 a separate State board of health was once more established to administer the health services of the State.<sup>28</sup>

#### BOARD OF LUNACY AND CHARITY AND BOARD OF INSANITY

When the administration of health services had been removed from its jurisdiction, the State board continued its supervisory activities and services for dependent persons, delinquent children, and mentally defective persons under the name of the State board of lunacy and charity. These combined services were the responsibility of the board for 12 years, when its work was again limited by the establishment of another agency to supervise the care of the insane and mentally deficient.

Growing realization of the need for a board that could do more intensive study and research in the field of mental diseases and in methods of caring for mentally afflicted persons than was possible for a board with varied interests resulted in the creation in 1898 of a State board of insanity, under which were placed all State serv-

<sup>24</sup> First Annual Report of the Massachusetts Board of Health, Lunacy, and Charity, January 1880, p. xix.

<sup>25</sup> Laws of 1879, ch. 291.

<sup>26</sup> Laws of 1869, ch. 420.

<sup>27</sup> Vincent, George E.: Public Welfare and Public Health. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 105, No. 194 (January 1923), p. 36.

<sup>28</sup> Laws of 1886, ch. 101.

ices affecting the mentally ill or defective.<sup>29</sup> This board of five persons, appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of 5 years, was authorized to appoint an executive officer, who was required to be a physician and an expert on insanity, and who might be a member of the board. The board was also authorized to appoint other necessary agents and officers. It was given general supervision over State institutions caring for the insane or feeble-minded, as well as over local public or private institutions caring for these groups. It was also the responsibility of the board to encourage scientific investigation by the medical staff of the hospitals and to publish reports of research. All duties of the commissioners of lunacy, originally vested in the State board of health, lunacy, and charity, were given to the board under the new name, commissioners of insanity.

#### BOARD OF CHARITY

With the withdrawal of its mental-hygiene services, the State board was renamed the State board of charity. During the remaining 21 years of its service (1898-1919) the activities of the board were centered on its rapidly expanding work for dependent adults and for dependent, delinquent, and physically handicapped children. Its supervisory responsibilities were increased during this time to include supervision of all private charitable organizations and of the State medical charities, including the State hospital school for crippled children, the State sanatoria, and other special hospitals for adults.

In spite of changes in name and realinement of services, the continuity of the board remained unbroken from its original appointment in 1879 as a State board of health, lunacy, and charity until its abolition at the time of the reorganization of State government in 1919. The board inherited from the earlier board of State charities (1863-79) many of its policies, standards of service, and procedures, and its service is generally considered as having begun in 1863.

#### COMMISSION ON MENTAL DISEASES

In 1916 the State board of insanity was abolished, after 18 years of service, and its duties were transferred to a commission on mental diseases. This commission represented a new form of administrative board in the welfare plan of the State, that of a paid director appointed by the Governor, who with four unsalaried associate directors, also appointed by the Governor, constituted the commission.

The director was appointed for a term of 5 years, at a salary not to exceed \$7,500. The director and at least two of the associate directors, who were appointed for a 4-year term, were required to be physicians and to be expert in the care and treatment of the insane.<sup>30</sup> The commissioners had general supervision of all public and private institutions caring for mentally handicapped persons and were authorized to license annually all private homes or hospitals caring for such persons.

Since the plan for direct appointment of the director was in accord with the method of appointing commissioners of departments, which

<sup>29</sup> Laws of 1898, ch. 433.

<sup>30</sup> General Laws 1916, ch. 285.

was adopted at the time of the reorganization of State government in 1919, no changes were necessary in the administrative set-up when the department of mental diseases was established.

### STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH PENAL AFFAIRS

The law reestablishing the State prison at Charleston in 1827 provided that three inspectors of the State prison should be appointed by the Governor for terms not exceeding 4 years, at a yearly salary of \$100 each.<sup>31</sup> One or more of the inspectors were required to visit the prison weekly or oftener, to inspect the books, and to ascertain whether the laws and the rules and regulations formulated by the board were being carried out by the officials of the prison. An annual report to the Governor on all matters of prison administration was required. As other State penal institutions were established this plan of supervision was extended to them.

Central supervision of local jails and houses of correction was not undertaken until 1870, although the appointment of county or city overseers for these institutions was authorized in 1834. The laws of 1870 provided for the appointment by the Governor of three commissioners of prisons, to serve for overlapping terms of 3 years. The commissioners were authorized to elect an executive officer, who became a member of the board and received a salary of \$2,000 a year.<sup>32</sup> It was the responsibility of the commissioners, with an advisory board of women visitors, created by the same act, to provide general supervision and inspection of all jails and houses of correction. The three women visitors limited their services to institutions in which women were confined.

### BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF PRISONS

The first State board with general authority over all penal institutions in the Commonwealth was created in 1879. This board, which superseded all previously appointed inspectors, commissioners, and women visitors, consisted of five persons, two of whom were women, appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of 5 years. The board, which received no salary, was authorized to elect a secretary to serve as its executive officer at a salary of \$2,000 a year.<sup>33</sup>

The board was given authority to prepare rules and regulations for the conduct of State prisons, to approve all appointments of employees of the State prisons other than the wardens or superintendents and assistant watchmen, and to inspect and supervise the government, discipline, work, and instruction of the convicts. General supervision over all jails and houses of correction was also authorized, including the right to transfer persons from local institutions to the State prison, reformatory, or workhouse.

### BUREAU OF PRISONS

The bureau of prisons, established in 1916 as the successor to the board of prison commissioners, was the first State welfare agency in Massachusetts having administrative authority vested in a director.

<sup>31</sup> Laws of 1827, ch. 118.

<sup>32</sup> Laws of 1870, ch. 370.

<sup>33</sup> Laws of 1879, ch. 294.

The director of the bureau was appointed by the Governor for a term of 3 years, at an annual salary not exceeding \$6,000. The director was authorized to appoint two deputy directors to assist him in his work. Provision was also made for an advisory board of five members, two of whom were women, to visit and inspect the prisons, to investigate questions arising, and to propose measures for improvement in service.<sup>34</sup> A board of parole, appointed by the Governor, whose members received an annual salary of \$1,200, superseded the separate boards of parole of the State prison and reformatory and the State reformatory for women.

The prison bureau had been in existence only 3 years when its work was taken over by the department of correction.<sup>35</sup> The advisory board was not continued under the new department. The new parole board, however, became a more integral part of the department, as one of the two deputy commissioners appointed by the commissioner on approval of the Governor served as a member.

#### COMMISSION ON PROBATION

The first probation law in the United States was passed in Massachusetts in 1878.<sup>36</sup> It directed the mayor of Boston to appoint annually "either from the police force of said city or from the citizens at large" a probation officer for the criminal courts of Suffolk County, who was to be under the general control of the Boston police chief.<sup>37</sup> In 1880 authority to establish the office of probation officer was given to the aldermen or selectmen in any city or town except the city of Boston.<sup>38</sup> The system developed slowly but steadily, and by 1898 the elements of a State-wide probation system could be found.

A statute enacted in 1891 made it mandatory for the presiding justice of each lower court to appoint a probation officer,<sup>39</sup> and in 1898 the superior court was authorized to appoint its own officers.<sup>40</sup>

An attempt to coordinate the work of the probation officers in the several courts was made in the law of 1880, which required probation officers to make returns to the prison commissioners. Twenty years later provision was made for these commissioners to be the channel of communication between the probation officers of the several courts, and they were given authority, duties, and powers similar to those later given to the board of probation.<sup>41</sup> In their annual report for 1907 the prison commissioners admitted their inability to obtain "a high degree of coordination in the work of probation officers," and suggested the appointment by the superior court of an officer "who should observe the work of other courts."<sup>42</sup>

In his message to the legislature in January 1908, the Governor said:

There should be a central clearing house, so to speak, for probation officers, under the control of the courts, to which detailed information should be given and from which information should be disseminated alike to all probation officers and to all courts.

<sup>34</sup> Laws of 1916, ch. 241.

<sup>35</sup> Laws of 1919, ch. 350.

<sup>36</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Board of Probation for the Year Ending September 30, 1933, p. 2. Public Doc. No. 85. Boston.

<sup>37</sup> Laws of 1878, ch. 198.

<sup>38</sup> Laws of 1880, ch. 129.

<sup>39</sup> Laws of 1891, ch. 356.

<sup>40</sup> Laws of 1898, ch. 511.

<sup>41</sup> Laws of 1900, ch. 449.

<sup>42</sup> Report of the Prison Commissioners, 1907. Quoted in part in Annual Report of the Board of Probation for the Year Ending September 30, 1933.

All probation officers are appointed by the courts. The commissioner or commissioners in charge of this office should be appointed by the supreme judicial court, that the Massachusetts tradition of separating the judiciary from any hint of political influence may be maintained.<sup>43</sup>

The Governor's suggestions were accepted by the legislature of 1908, which provided for a commission on probation, composed of five unpaid members, each appointed by the chief justice of the superior court for a term of 5 years.<sup>44</sup> It was intended that this commission would organize and coordinate the probation system in Massachusetts and make possible an exchange of information between the courts. To this end provision was made for reports to the commission on probation from the probation officers, trial justices, commission of correction, penal institutions, commissioner of Boston, and county commissioners of counties other than Suffolk, the information to be accessible at all times to the justices and officers of the courts, to the police commissioner of Boston, and to all chiefs of police and city marshals.

The commission was authorized to appoint a deputy commissioner of probation as its executive officer, to hold office during its pleasure. His duties were prescribed by the commission, and he was to receive such salary as the commission should determine.

In the reorganization of State services in 1919 the commission on probation was continued as an independent unit with the same responsibilities, but in 1929 its name was changed to the board of probation.<sup>45</sup>

## REORGANIZATION OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT

Reorganization of the State government in the interest of economy and efficiency became an important issue in Massachusetts during the second decade of the twentieth century. Some of the proposals made were strongly resisted,<sup>46</sup> but in 1919 a law was enacted that provided for a complete reorganization of State government under 20 administrative and executive departments. Centralized control was achieved by giving the Governor authority to appoint the administrative head of each department except the four departments under the direction of elective constitutional officials. (See p. 2.)<sup>47</sup> Twelve departments were headed by commissioners;<sup>48</sup> the department of civil service was under the joint administration of a commissioner in charge of civil service and a director in charge of registration; the department of banking and insurance was divided into three divisions with a commissioner in charge of each; the department of industrial accidents was administered by a board of seven members, and the department of public utilities by a commission of five members.

The plan for the welfare services of the State followed in general the existing distribution of work under the board of charities, the commission on mental diseases, and the bureau of prisons, the three

<sup>43</sup> Laws of 1908, p. 883.

<sup>44</sup> Laws of 1908, ch. 465.

<sup>45</sup> Laws of 1929, ch. 179.

<sup>46</sup> Breckinridge, Sophonisba P.: *Public Welfare Administration in the United States*, pp. 401-419. Select Documents. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927.

<sup>47</sup> Constitution, Art. XVII of the Amendments; Laws of 1919, ch. 350.

<sup>48</sup> Agriculture, conservation, corporations and taxation, education, correction, public welfare, public safety, public works and public health, mental diseases, labor, education, metropolitan district.

departments created being the department of public welfare, the department of mental diseases, and the department of correction.

#### STATE INSTITUTIONS

Each State institution and its administrative board when such existed was placed in one of three welfare departments (correction, mental hygiene, and public welfare) or in the department of public health. The State sanatoria and special hospitals previously under the supervision of the State board of charity were placed under the department of public health. The State farm, with its varied population of misdemeanants, criminal insane, and State poor needing infirmary care, had been supervised by the State board of charity; it was placed now under the department of correction, which was given complete administrative control over all penal institutions. Within the department of mental diseases were placed the boards of trustees for the State hospitals for the insane, the schools for the feeble-minded, and the hospital for epileptics, and general supervision over these institutions was delegated to the department. Boards of trustees of the three schools for delinquent children, the State infirmary, and the State hospital for crippled children were placed in the department of public welfare.<sup>49</sup>

The executive and administrative head of each of the welfare departments was a commissioner appointed by the Governor. Nevertheless the contribution that had been made to the State by the unsalaried boards in the 56 years they had been responsible for its welfare program was recognized in the plans for reorganization. The commission on mental diseases was continued within the department of mental diseases,<sup>50</sup> and an advisory board was provided to assist the commissioner of public welfare.

No change was made in the organization of these departments after 1919, although their services were developed and expanded with consequent change in internal organization. It is of interest to note, however, that a proposal for further consolidation of State services was made in 1922 by a commission on State administration and expenditures. This plan suggested consolidating in one welfare department the departments of correction, mental diseases, and public welfare, and the institutional activities of the department of public health. The apparent aim of this proposed action was the development of central business administration of institutions and State aid. It was also suggested that State aid could be reduced if the settlement law were amended so that local settlement could be acquired in less than 5 years.

<sup>49</sup> Laws of 1919, ch. 350, secs. 8, 79-95.

<sup>50</sup> This commission consisted of four unsalaried persons designated as associate commissioners. General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 19, secs. 1-3.

## THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

### DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

Some of the services of the department had their beginnings under the original board of State charities, whereas others were authorized after the creation of the department. The gradual evolution of State services for dependent adults and children, from the almshouse program initiated during the middle of the nineteenth century to the method of granting assistance to adults in their own homes when possible and of caring for children in family homes, shows the progress made in Massachusetts on problems of dependency. The development of procedures and resources for the care of dependent and neglected children has been of special interest.

In its first annual report the board of State charities protested against the practice of caring for large numbers of children in the three State almshouses and attempted to bring the children together in the almshouse at Monson. In 1866 legislative authority was given to the board for this action.<sup>51</sup> and in September of that year the State primary school at Monson was opened. Although indenture of children had become an established practice, it was not until the same year that a visiting agent was employed by administrative action of the board to visit children placed out in family homes from the primary school and from the almshouse at Tewksbury. In 1869 statutory authority for this service was provided<sup>52</sup> and extended to include all children maintained wholly or in part by the Commonwealth. The visiting agent was required to visit placed-out children and to investigate the homes of persons applying for children. Three visitors were employed in 1869 to assist the agent with the work, two of them temporary employees.

The same year marked the beginning of a State program of foster-home care for delinquent children. An agent of the board was required to be present in court on behalf of any child about to be committed to a reformatory; and if it was found to the interest of the child the court was authorized to put him in charge of the board of State charities for placement in a family home, the cost of care not to exceed that in one of the State reformatories. This provision originally applied only to boys, but by the next year it was extended to include girls.

The high mortality among infants cared for in the State almshouse became a serious problem, and in 1876 the trustees, at the advice of the State board of health, lunacy, and charity, refused to receive infants without their mothers. Arrangement was made for all infants to be removed from the almshouse at Tewksbury and cared for either at the primary school or in families, and in 1882 a law was passed providing that all infants should be cared for directly

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<sup>51</sup> Laws of 1866, ch. 209.

<sup>52</sup> Laws of 1869, ch. 453.

by the State board, which had authority to place them at board in private families.<sup>53</sup> In order to supervise the homes in which children were placed, the board supplemented its small paid staff by appointing a large number of interested women as auxiliary visitors.<sup>54</sup> This plan was continued until about 1918, when all supervision was transferred to paid employees.

The placement of children in family homes developed rapidly after 1882, when the State board was authorized to provide for neglected children under 14 years of age and to care for indigent children under 16 years of age who had no legal settlement.<sup>55</sup> That year also marked the first appropriation to the board for boarding children in family homes. With the development of the State boarding-home program the need for care of children in the primary school decreased, and in 1895 the buildings were given over to the State to be used as a hospital for epileptics.<sup>56</sup>

Of the three State almshouses and the paupers' hospital established in 1852, the only one that has continued to accept indigent persons is the State infirmary at Tewksbury. The infirmary is a State hospital for the care of acutely or chronically ill persons who have no legal settlement in the cities or towns. State aid in their own homes to poor persons who had no legal settlement was first authorized in 1877.<sup>57</sup> Many amendments to the original act were made, but this plan for aid has been continuous.

As early as 1863 local public officers were required to report to the State board on the aid given to indigent persons, but supervision of private charitable corporations was not authorized until 1909.<sup>58</sup> The enactment of the mothers' aid law in 1913 gave another administrative responsibility to the State board of charity.<sup>59</sup> With the organization of the department of public welfare in 1919, several additional activities, which will be discussed later, were added to the duties of the department.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

### COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC WELFARE

The executive and administrative head of the department is the commissioner of public welfare, who is appointed by the Governor for a term of 5 years at a salary not to exceed \$7,000.<sup>60</sup> From the reorganization of the State government in 1919 to the time a representative of the Children's Bureau visited the State in 1934 the department had had only two commissioners. The first was the former secretary of the State board of charity, who had been appointed in 1910. He continued to hold office after the reorganization in 1919, but refused reappointment in 1920. The second commissioner took office on January 1, 1921, and was reappointed in 1925 and 1930.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Laws of 1882, ch. 181, sec. 2.

<sup>54</sup> Richardson, Mrs. Anne B.: *The Massachusetts System of Caring for State Minor Wards*, p. 55. *History of Child Saving in the United States: report of the committee on the history of child-saving work to the Twentieth National Conference of Charities and Correction in Chicago, June 1893.* Boston, 1893.

<sup>55</sup> Laws of 1882, ch. 181.

<sup>56</sup> Folks, Homer: *The Care of Destitute, Neglected, and Delinquent Children*, p. 153. Macmillan Co., New York, 1911.

<sup>57</sup> Laws of 1877, ch. 180.

<sup>58</sup> Laws of 1909, ch. 379.

<sup>59</sup> Laws of 1913, ch. 763.

<sup>60</sup> In 1933 this was cut to \$6,627 and in 1934 only \$5,950 was appropriated for this purpose.

<sup>61</sup> A new commissioner, the third, was appointed in 1935.



The Governor's term of office is 2 years, and the 5-year term of the commissioner means that his appointment seldom occurs at the beginning of the Governor's term, when greatest political pressure is likely to be exerted.

#### ADVISORY AND ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS

An advisory board of six members, of whom two must be women, to be appointed by the Governor for overlapping 3-year terms, was provided for the department in the statutes. The commissioner serves ex officio as chairman of this board. Of the members of the advisory board serving on November 30, 1932, two had been appointed in 1906 and 1909 as members of the board of charity and were retained on the new board of public welfare. Two others had served since the creation of the board in 1919 and the remaining two were appointed in 1929 and 1931. The board met monthly. It considered and approved all policies formulated by the department and made recommendations with regard to its services and the administration of its several divisions.

The board was given authority to revise, amend, or affirm rules and regulations for the conduct of the department.<sup>62</sup> Any revision of such rules and regulations must be presented to the board annually. Although the board had no responsibility for the appointment of the commissioner, its recommendations to the Governor in the two appointments made thus far have been carried out. The statutes also provided that when so directed by the Governor, the commissioner and the board might assume and exercise powers and perform the duties of the boards of trustees of any institution under the supervision of or included in the department, but there had never been occasion for them to do this. The members of the board served without pay, although compensation was allowed for their expenses in the discharge of their duties.

According to the commissioner, the advisory board was of real assistance in the administration of the department. Appointments had been carefully made, so that the support of the members of the board in the development of policies was of much value. One member of the board served on the old-age appeal board. At one time there were subcommittees on aid and relief and on child guardianship, but these were later discontinued.

Massachusetts was one of four States<sup>63</sup> in which the department of public welfare included administrative boards responsible for the actual administration of the State institutions in the department. The general relation of the department to these institutions was supervisory, but the commissioner was responsible for the actions of the several boards of trustees. He signed all monthly bills and building contracts, approved the budgets, and had authority to approve appointments made by the boards of trustees in the institutions.

In 1934 there were three such boards, whose members were appointed by the Governor. The board of trustees of the State infirmary consisted of five men and two women appointed for overlapping terms of 3 years. A single board of trustees administered the three State

<sup>62</sup> Laws of 1919, ch. 350, sec. 94; or General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 121, sec. 4.

<sup>63</sup> Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

correctional institutions, the Lyman school for boys, the industrial school for boys, and the industrial school for girls, and the parole services from these schools. This board was composed of nine persons, two of whom were required to be women, appointed for overlapping terms of 5 years. The board of trustees for the Massachusetts hospital school was composed of five persons who served for a 5-year term.<sup>64</sup>

In 1933 a State board of housing was created in the department, consisting of five unpaid members appointed by the Governor.<sup>65</sup> This board was given power to appoint its employees without the approval of the commissioner.

#### DIVISIONS

The board of State charities, whose services were transferred to the department of public welfare, had two major administrative divisions—the division of State minor wards and the division of State adult poor. In the law creating the department of public welfare, these divisions were transferred to it and renamed the division of child guardianship and the division of aid and relief. In addition a division of juvenile training was created under the administration of the board of trustees of the Massachusetts training schools. This board became a part of the department.<sup>66</sup> The department of public welfare as organized in 1934 included the three original divisions, a bureau of old-age assistance, and three subdivisions for whose work the commissioner was directly responsible—the subdivision of private incorporated charities, the subdivision of town planning, and the subdivision of crippled children.

### ACTIVITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

#### DIVISION OF AID AND RELIEF

This division administered State aid to needy persons, except old-age pensions. This included aid given to persons who were the responsibility of the State because they had no legal settlement in the cities and towns and aid given by the State to local public units for mothers' pensions. The division arranged for transfer of nonresidents to their towns or States of settlement and supervised all temporary homes for transients. It also provided social services for the State infirmary at Tewksbury.

The work of the division was organized under four subdivisions in 1934, of which two provided special services to children. The staff, in addition to the director and an assistant director, was composed of the superintendent of old-age assistance, 5 supervisors, 16 aid and settlement workers, 37 social workers, 18 junior social workers, a hospital medical visitor, an attorney who served part time, and necessary clerical assistants. In addition, 4 social workers and 24 junior social workers were employed temporarily in the subdivision of relief.

#### Subdivision of settlement.

The workers from this unit investigated the settlement status of patients admitted to the State infirmary, the hospital school for crippled children, and the State sanatoria, although the latter were

<sup>64</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 18, secs. 10–13.

<sup>65</sup> Laws of 1933, ch. 364.

<sup>66</sup> Laws of 1919, ch. 350, secs. 89–91.

under the administration of the department of health.<sup>67</sup> In addition, all special settlement problems in the division of aid and relief were referred to the subdivision of settlement. Although the department had no legal responsibility for the State sanatoria, the investigation of settlement of patients, which was started under the State board of charity, continued after administration of these institutions was vested in the department of health in 1919, as the department of health had no machinery for it.

In 1934 about 78 percent of the investigations made by the subdivision involved patients admitted to the State infirmary. A worker from the subdivision of settlement spent 2 or 3 days a week there. Although patients were admitted if they had a proper certificate from a city or town showing that they had no settlement and were therefore the responsibility of the State, an investigation was made after their admission in order to confirm this. The staff of the unit in 1934 consisted of a supervisor and three workers, all of them men.

#### **Subdivision of relief.**

This unit supervised public relief and health services rendered by local boards of public welfare and boards of health to persons in their own homes and in hospitals who were without legal settlement. According to the statutes such persons are a charge upon the State, and reimbursement is made to the local board for their care after approval by the State department of public welfare. Poor persons with legal settlement who were cared for in their own homes were also visited by the workers of this unit even though their maintenance was paid for by the local board.

The staff of the unit in 1934 consisted of a supervisor, a hospital social worker, 13 regular visitors, and 28 emergency workers, most of whom were designated as junior social workers, who were added to the staff in 1931 to meet the steadily mounting case load resulting from the depression. The work of the unit had been organized on a district basis. The districts, which included the city of Boston, increased during the economic depression from 13 to 20. The workers spent practically all their time in the field except 1 day a week, when they came in to dictate their reports. A few of the workers in districts some distance from Boston lived in their districts and hired stenographers by the hour. Certain members of the staff were designated as supervisors in districts having more than one worker.

Although services to poor persons without legal settlement were given in their town of residence by the local board, the State visitors visited the homes to supervise the care given. Continued visits were made if a family received aid for some time, and after each visit a recommendation was made to the local board of public welfare as to the amount of aid to be given. No uniform budget had been prepared by the division, but the State visitors had a guide by which family food budgets could be estimated in accordance with the fluctuation of prices in the cities and towns of the States. The general average allowed was \$8 per week to feed a family of five persons. Fuel and rent were sometimes added to this amount, depend-

<sup>67</sup> Before 1932 a large number of indigent persons were cared for in the infirmary department of the State farm (under the department of correction). Since this institution is primarily responsible for the care of delinquents, indigent persons have been transferred gradually to the State infirmary. Investigation of the settlement of the few indigent persons cared for at the State farm are made by the subdivision of settlement.

ing on the local situation. For families receiving recurrent relief, a new notice was sent to the State department each time relief was renewed, and a visit was made to the family with a report that often duplicated much of the information included in previous reports. An individual record was kept in the State department for each family.

Policies governing the granting of aid to persons without legal settlement were adopted by the commissioner and the advisory board. Local boards were advised to follow these same policies for persons who had legal settlement. The division had also prepared a set of forms that all local boards of public welfare were urged to use in order that uniform records might be kept. The division could require the use of these forms if it desired, but it has preferred that they be adopted voluntarily, as its service to local boards of public welfare was advisory only. Over 100 cities and towns were using at least some of the forms in 1934.

#### Subdivision of social service.

This unit was organized to provide social-service facilities for the State infirmary at Tewksbury. It was, however, called upon for many other social services needed by the division of aid and relief. Before the organization of a State service for transients under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, this unit did practically all the public work for transients in the State.

The staff of the unit in 1934 consisted of a supervisor, six social workers, and two junior social workers, all of whom were women, and an attorney who gave part-time service. Practically every person admitted to the infirmary, which had an average population of 2,965 during 1934, was seen by a member of the staff, but intensive service was given only to women and children and to men who requested or needed special service. About 100 of the 224 minors in the institution at the end of the year were infants or small children with their mothers. Many of these were children born out of wedlock for whom aid had to be given in establishing paternity and in planning for their care. Of the men and women admitted, many were acutely or chronically ill, needing social service on discharge or long-time care in the infirmary.

#### Subdivision of mothers' aid.

This unit administered State funds for the support of families receiving mothers' aid and supervised the care given to these families by local boards of public welfare. About one-seventh of the 4,123 families under care on November 30, 1934, had no local settlement and were being supported entirely from State funds. The State reimbursed the towns and cities for one-third of the funds provided to the remaining families.<sup>68</sup>

The staff of the unit in 1934 consisted of a supervisor and 11 visitors. Services to families receiving mothers' aid are described in detail on pages 33 to 34.

#### BUREAU OF OLD-AGE ASSISTANCE

This bureau was established on July 1, 1931, after the passage of the old-age assistance law in 1930.<sup>69</sup> In 1934 its staff was composed of the

<sup>68</sup> The law on aid to dependent children enacted in 1936 provides for further reimbursement to the cities and towns to the extent of monies received by the Commonwealth from the Federal Government for this purpose.

<sup>69</sup> Laws of 1930, ch. 402.

superintendent, a supervisor, and 36 visitors, of whom 13 were men and 23 were women. This bureau of the department of public welfare supervised the administration of old-age assistance through the local boards of public welfare and administered State funds that were used to reimburse cities and towns for one-third of the amount of aid given to persons with legal settlement and for the whole amount given to persons without legal settlement. The superintendent of the bureau also supervised licensed boarding homes for aged persons, inspected city and town infirmaries, and compiled statistics of poor relief.

The methods of granting relief under the law were founded on social-service procedures. Investigations were made and allotments for care were based on the need of the individual and on standards of living in the community. The weekly expense per person varied from approximately \$2 to supplement funds provided by relatives up to \$15 for full payment of care and hospitalization for invalids and chronically ill persons.

#### DIVISION OF CHILD GUARDIANSHIP

This division cared for all dependent, neglected, delinquent, and wayward children accepted or committed as wards of the department of public welfare. It also investigated petitions for adoption referred by the courts and supervised infants' boarding homes and maternity homes. Another activity of the visitors of the division was to visit all children boarded in family homes by town and city officials. In addition to the director of the division, the staff in 1934 included 6 supervisors, 38 social workers, 11 junior social workers, 15 visitors and guardians to older boys, 5 nurses, a doctor, a part-time attorney, a chief administrative clerk, and clerical assistants. The work of the division was organized in seven subdivisions, five of which cared directly for State wards.

##### **Subdivision of investigation.**

This unit, which had a supervisor and seven social workers, made investigations of the families of dependent children referred to the department either through the applications of parents or guardians or of boards of public welfare<sup>70</sup> and of families of neglected children who had no legal settlement and who were committed to the department by boards of public welfare.<sup>71</sup> All applications for discharge were also referred to this subdivision. No effort had been made to assign the workers in the division to districts; the staff all worked throughout the entire State.

##### **Subdivisions caring for children of different ages.**

On the basis of the different services needed by children of different ages, a plan had been adopted for placing dependent, neglected, or delinquent wards of the division who were mentally normal under the supervision of staff members assigned to work exclusively with children of certain age groups. Each subdivision so organized placed children of one age group in family homes and supervised the care given. As the children became older, supervision was transferred to other subdivisions. A district plan of staff organization was used for all subdivisions except the one caring for the youngest children.

<sup>70</sup> Gen. Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 38.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., sec. 22.

In 1934 the children under 3 years of age were under the care of five nurses and a supervisor, who also licensed boarding homes and inspected maternity hospitals. These children were all placed within a radius of 40 miles from Boston, and assignment of the staff to districts had not seemed necessary; therefore the same nurse supervised a child for the entire time he was in the care of the subdivision.

Children from 3 to 12 years of age were under the care of a staff composed of a supervisor and 22 visitors. In this subdivision definite districts had been set up and district lines were followed carefully. Five workers in this subdivision also supervised older girls living in their districts, but this plan had not proved entirely satisfactory and there was some doubt of the wisdom of continuing it.

Girls over 12 years of age, except the few noted above, were under the care of a supervisor and 13 visitors. An attempt had been made to follow a district plan in this subdivision, but it was necessary to disregard district lines occasionally in order that a worker might continue supervision of a girl who for some reason needed to be placed outside the district. Effort was made to have the same visitor supervise each girl from the time she was transferred to the subdivision until her discharge.

The plan for the care of boys over 12 years of age was like that for older girls, and the same difficulty in maintaining rigid district lines had been encountered. A supervisor and 15 visitors, all men, supervised this group.

#### **Subdivision for mentally retarded children.**

Children under the care of the division who were mentally deficient to such a degree that they could not profit by attendance at regular schools and who required specialized care were transferred to this unit, which had two workers.

#### **Subdivision of adoptions.**

This unit investigated adoption petitions referred to the department by the courts of the State in accordance with the provision of a law passed in 1931.<sup>72</sup> Four workers in addition to a supervisor were employed in this subdivision in 1934.

### **DIVISION OF JUVENILE TRAINING**

Unlike the other divisions in the department, this division was headed by a board of nine trustees, of whom two were required to be women, appointed by the Governor for 5-year terms. Although the board members were unpaid, they served as an administrative board rather than an advisory one. The statute provided that one member of the board of trustees designated by the Governor should serve as director of the division without compensation. Nevertheless, the trustees were authorized to appoint a paid secretary for an indefinite term to direct the activities of the division. This division administered the three State training schools, including parole from these schools, which was organized under two subdivisions, the girls' parole branch and the boys' parole branch. The girls' parole branch had 10 visitors and a superintendent of parole in 1934. Eight visitors worked according to a district plan; one, whose work was State-wide, had

<sup>72</sup> Laws of 1931, ch. 342.

charge of girls attending school; and another investigated petitions for discharge and supervised a few cases scattered over the State. The boys' parole branch had 15 visitors and a superintendent of parole. A district plan was followed insofar as it was possible.

#### SUBDIVISIONS UNDER DIRECTION OF THE COMMISSIONER

##### **Social service for crippled children.**

The nurse in charge of this work directed the taking of the annual school census of physically handicapped children and arranged for the care and treatment of children who were found through the census or whose cases were reported to the department by agencies or interested groups.

##### **Supervision of private charitable corporations.**

Supervision of incorporated charities was conducted by three supervisors of equal rank. There was no strict division of work, but in general one supervisor visited children's agencies, another relief agencies, and the third agencies for the aged. The commissioner served as chief of this subdivision and conducted monthly staff meetings with the three supervisors.

##### **Town planning.**

Massachusetts had recognized the economic and social value of town planning, including zoning for industrial and residential areas and a definite program for public improvements and land development. A temporary homestead commission was established in 1911<sup>73</sup> and became a permanent commission in 1913.<sup>74</sup> This commission was abolished in 1919 and its functions transferred to the department of public welfare. A consultant on town planning had charge of this service and was engaged in furthering the organization of town-planning boards and in developing zoning plans for the cities and towns of the State. At the end of the fiscal year 1934, 121 cities or towns had planning boards and 78 cities or towns had adopted some plan for zoning.

#### SUPERVISION AND ADMINISTRATION OF STATE INSTITUTIONS

Administration of the five State institutions in the department was vested in administrative boards of trustees, one in charge of the infirmary, another in charge of the hospital school, and a third in charge of the three schools for delinquent boys and girls. Each board of trustees selected the superintendent of the institution under its control with the general approval of the commissioner of public welfare. Although, in general, positions in the institutions were under civil service, the positions of physicians and nurses, cottage masters and matrons, industrial instructors, and common laborers were exempt from civil-service requirements. Selection of personnel for such positions was the responsibility of the superintendent and the board of trustees.

The relation of the commissioner and the department to the institution was supervisory. The law specified that visits to the State infirmary and the Lyman school for boys should be made at least once a month. It was the duty of the commissioner also to make an annual

<sup>73</sup> Laws of 1911, ch. 607.

<sup>74</sup> Laws of 1913, ch. 595.

report to the legislature from reports submitted to him by the trustees of the State hospital school and the three State training schools. All plans and specifications for new buildings at the five institutions under its supervision had to be approved by the department of public welfare. The department also examined and analyzed each institution's expenditures, keeping in mind the function of the institution and the relation of its business to the care, education, and welfare of the inmates. A financial report of the five institutions was published in the annual report of the department.

The character and extent of the supervision given by the department varied greatly with the different institutions. The State infirmary was closely related to the division of aid and relief, in which it was placed when the department was established. Members of the staff of the division were in daily contact with the institution. They had charge of the intake and discharge of inmates and provided social services when they were needed.

The relation of the Massachusetts hospital school for crippled and deformed children of the State to the division of child guardianship, of which it was legally a part, was not nearly so close, although the hospital gave medical and surgical treatment to minor wards who were under the care of the division. The highly specialized services for crippled children bore little relation to the general work of the division, and as a result the hospital was practically under the direct supervision of the commissioner.

The State training schools for boys and for girls were such an integral part of the division of juvenile training, which was headed by the trustees of the training schools, that the director of the division administered rather than supervised these institutions. Constant contact with the institution was also maintained by the staff of the parole boards of this division.

#### PUBLICATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

A report of the work of the department is published annually. In addition to general information in regard to the activities of the divisions and institutions in the department, this report includes information on the financial situation and number of persons under the care of each charitable organization supervised by the department; a summary of relief given by city and town boards of public welfare; information on population of almshouses and recommendations for equipment of almshouse throughout the Commonwealth; and a summary of welfare legislation enacted during the year. The policies and regulations adopted by the advisory board of the department are printed and issued to anyone concerned. The department also has made available copies of the laws relating to its services.

The department had not issued a popular welfare bulletin, such as several State departments of welfare publish monthly or quarterly, as a means of informing the public on welfare problems. It had, however, issued at various times a single sheet called "News About the Department," which presented matters of interest in regard to public welfare.

In its educational work with public-welfare agencies the department relied largely upon the work of its field staff rather than upon an organized plan for the development of standards of service.



However, the department cooperated closely with the two regional organizations of local public-welfare officers that had been established in the eastern and western sections of the Commonwealth. Relief officials, members of boards of public welfare, and others engaged in relief work in these areas held monthly conferences, and frequently the commissioner and other members of the State administrative or field staff met with them.

In Massachusetts there are a large number of private welfare organizations, and many of them have done outstanding work in developing specialized types of care and high standards of services. The department of public welfare was concerned with the need for coordinating the services of private agencies and public agencies, but it had no active program such as group discussion of common problems and the formation through such group discussions of minimum standards of care. A few members of the staff were active as individuals in the State conference of social work.

The department for several years maintained a short-course training school for new members of the staff and for agents or representatives of local boards of public welfare or of private agencies. The need for new workers to meet the steadily mounting unemployment relief load greatly increased the demand for such training. In a course given during December 1933, 120 workers from the Civil Works Administration received an introduction to social-service problems.

During the period 1928 to 1932 a number of studies that led to recommendations to the legislature were made by the department or through special commissions with the cooperation of the department. These studies included such widely varied problems as the needs of crippled children; the probable cost of administering old-age assistance if the minimum age were reduced; the desirability of reducing the frequency of payments of accounts to cities and towns for reimbursement of "State cases"; the work of the county training schools; and the needed changes in laws relating to dependent, delinquent, and neglected children and other children needing special care.

## PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT

### METHOD OF APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS

Except for the commissioner and the directors of the three major divisions the staff was selected according to civil-service rules. The director of the division of aid and relief and the director of the division of child guardianship were appointed by the commissioner with the approval of the Governor and the council. The Governor designates one of the members of the board of trustees of the Massachusetts training schools as director of the division of juvenile training.<sup>75</sup> Staff members of the department were selected from civil-service lists by the division directors.

Civil service was adopted in Massachusetts<sup>76</sup> in 1884, just a year after the Federal civil-service law was passed. It functions not only in the State government but also in city governments. The reorganization law provided for a department of civil service and registration composed of a division of civil service and a division of

<sup>75</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 18, secs. 7-12.

<sup>76</sup> Laws of 1884, ch. 320.

registration. The division of civil service is under the supervision and control of a commissioner of civil service and two associate commissioners of different political parties, who are appointed by the Governor for a term of 3 years. These three officials constitute the civil-service board, which makes the rules and regulations governing the selection of persons for positions.

No general qualifications for personnel had been adopted by the division of civil service, with the result that standards varied with different examinations. At the time this study was made the highest qualifications ever set for social workers in the department of public welfare were those set in an examination given in August 1929, which specified for such workers an education equivalent to that required for graduation from a standard 4-year high school and either 1 year's experience in social-service case work, 1 year's training in an accredited school of social work, or graduation from a university. Similar qualifications were prescribed for social workers in an examination held in April 1931, but for junior social workers the requirement was merely education equivalent to graduation from a standard 4-year high school.

Qualifications for "supervisor of incorporated charities," set in an examination in April 1931, included "education equivalent to college education plus 2 years' experience in social case work or successful completion of a 2 years' course in a school of social service and 1 year's experience in social case work or education equivalent to standard high-school graduation plus 4 years' experience in social-service work, of which 2 years shall have been in a supervisory capacity." In 1934 a committee of the American Association of Social Workers was preparing more satisfactory qualifications to be presented to the civil-service board for adoption. The commissioner of public welfare was of the opinion that civil service had on the whole proved satisfactory, although the cooperation of the civil-service board with the department had differed with changes in the personnel of the board. Occasionally the commissioner of public welfare was asked about necessary qualifications for appointees and for suggestions as to examiners. Examiners in the field of social work were usually qualified persons with experience in social service.

With such requirements, it was not surprising that a number of the staff members had limited educational backgrounds. Recent additions to the department were more often college graduates than older members who had been admitted when civil-service qualifications were even lower. In the subdivision of investigation it was the rule that workers entering the service without training in social work should take case-work courses at the Simmons College School of Social Work. Other staff members had also taken training at this school. However, it was difficult to obtain workers from the school because no additional credit was allowed in the examinations for special training in social work. Although selection was limited to the three highest on the eligible list, war veterans had preference over others, and disabled veterans had special preference in all civil-service lists.

#### SALARIES

The salary scale was not high. In March 1934 the directors of the divisions received \$4,140 or \$4,350. The 15 supervisors received

from \$1,980 to \$3,450, but only 1 received \$3,450 and 1, \$1,980, the majority receiving \$2,340 to \$3,030. There was considerable variation in the salaries of regular staff members in the different divisions. One hundred and forty-three staff members received from \$1,230 to \$2,220 annually, the largest single group receiving \$1,980, although 22 received \$1,290; 20, \$1,620; 13, \$1,860; and 16, \$2,220. Twenty-eight temporary employees in the division of aid and relief who were not under civil service were paid \$1,290 to \$1,500 annually, but 24 of these workers were paid \$1,290.

## STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

The department of public welfare was the agency with the major responsibility for State services to dependent, delinquent, and neglected children, and it shared responsibility for the care of mentally handicapped children with the department of mental diseases and for the care of physically handicapped children with the department of health and the department of education. The need for coordination of these and other activities of the different departments and for discussion of common problems had been recognized and the commissioners of these departments and of the department of corrections met for this purpose about once a week. The commissioners had also made joint studies of certain child-welfare problems. This interrelation of services has been of great value in the development of a comprehensive program for children.

The following statement from the report of a special commission on child-welfare problems, which was issued in 1931, gives a general picture of the extent of the needs of the children of the Commonwealth and the services given to them:

There are within the State over 24,000 children cared for away from their own homes and families during a year, of whom approximately 7,000 are in the care of the State, 1,200 in the care of the city of Boston, 750 in the care of other cities and towns, 10,000 in private orphanages and institutions, and 5,800 placed out in foster homes by private agencies. More than 9,000 delinquent children were brought before the courts last year, and there are 1,075 such children in the three State juvenile training schools. During the same year more than 15,000 neglected children were reported as in need of protection. Nearly 2,000 children are born out of wedlock annually. There are yearly 1,000 adoptions, of which 60 percent are of illegitimate children. It is estimated that there are over 60,000 mentally defective or retarded children in the State, of which 7,500 are in special classes in the public schools, 3,800 in the State schools for the feeble-minded, 2,000 on these schools' waiting lists, and the largest number in the community. It is estimated that there are 6,000 physically handicapped children in the State.<sup>77</sup>

### DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

In Massachusetts local administration of welfare work is the responsibility of the cities and towns. The large number of boards of public welfare serving small populations and the requirement of 5 years of residence before legal settlement could be acquired in cities or towns were two factors that had greatly affected the extent to which the State gave direct care and had limited its efforts to build up local services through the employment of qualified social workers in local administrative units.

There has been general agreement among child-welfare workers that every community should have available the services of a qualified case worker to deal with problems of dependency, delinquency,

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<sup>77</sup> Report of the Special Commission Established to Investigate the Laws Relative to Dependent, Delinquent, and Neglected Children, and Children Otherwise Requiring Special Care, pp. 14, 15. Mass. House No. 1200. Wright & Potter Co., Boston, 1931.

and neglect when they first appear in order to prevent the development of more serious situations that may lead to separation of children from their parents or to complete dependency. That each town can support such a worker is of course improbable. The realization of this fact has been the basis for the development of county or district welfare services in a number of States.<sup>78</sup> In Massachusetts the State provided many of the specialized services needed for handicapped persons and attempted to safeguard the care given by local officials by inspecting and visiting the persons aided. Important as such work was in raising the standards of public care throughout the State, it probably delayed the development of local preventive services.<sup>79</sup>

Another interesting feature of the Massachusetts program was that a large part of the State department's activities in the care of dependent and neglected children was carried on in large cities that might have provided a qualified public staff. An illustration of this was the assignment of 4 of the 11 State workers supervising mothers' aid administration throughout the State to supervise the work of the Boston department, which employed a special staff of mothers' aid workers. Although questions of legal residence and a program of State care for seriously neglected children affected the situation, it is interesting to note also that out of the 1,197 dependent, neglected, and delinquent children accepted under the guardianship of the department of public welfare in 1934, 50 percent came from cities of 100,000 or more population, and another 12 percent came from cities of 50,000 but less than 100,000 population.<sup>80</sup>

The department realized the need for preventive work and the importance of having members of the State staff closely associated with the problems of the area in which they were working. This resulted in the use of a district plan for most services, each visitor working within a circumscribed area. Unfortunately, the responsibility for the great numbers of children already separated from their parents and the need for inspecting the care given to children by local public officers had overburdened workers and handicapped them in the development of preventive work.

## CARE OF DEPENDENT AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN

### CHILDREN ACCEPTED FOR STATE GUARDIANSHIP

The department of public welfare, through the division of child guardianship, accepted five classes of children for care under the provisions of the law. The board of public welfare of a town and the superintendent and board of trustees of the State infirmary were authorized to commit to the custody of the department any indigent or neglected "infant" having no known settlement in the State.<sup>81</sup> The department was permitted to accept for care children under 21 who were dependent on public charity upon written application

<sup>78</sup> The development of such services in New York, Alabama, and Minnesota is described in parts 2, 3, and 5 of *A Historical Summary of State Services for Children* (Children's Bureau Publication No. 239, 1937-38).

<sup>79</sup> Since June 1936 Massachusetts has been cooperating with the U. S. Children's Bureau, in accordance with the provisions of the Social Security Act, in providing protective and preventive services for children in rural areas.

<sup>80</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: *Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for the Year Ending November 30, 1934*, p. 33. Public Doc. No. 17. Boston.

<sup>81</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 22.

of the parent or guardian, or, if there was no parent or guardian, the application of a friend or the board of public welfare of the city or town in which the child was found.<sup>82</sup> The Boston Juvenile Court or the district courts had authority, after an adjudication of neglect, to commit children to the custody of the department until they reached the age of 21 years or for less time.<sup>83</sup> Two classes of delinquent children, "wayward" and "delinquent," might be committed to the department. A wayward child was defined as a child between 7 and 17 years of age who habitually associated with "vicious or immoral persons," or who was growing up in circumstances exposing him to the danger of leading an immoral, vicious, or criminal life. A delinquent child was defined as a child between 7 and 17 who had violated any city ordinance or town bylaw or committed an offense not punishable by death or imprisonment for life.<sup>84</sup> A child adjudged "wayward" might be dealt with by the court in the same manner as a neglected child, which made it possible to commit him to the department. A child adjudged "delinquent" could with the consent of the department be placed "in charge of any person," and when he was so placed the department was authorized to provide for his maintenance in whole or in part.<sup>85</sup>

Most of the children received by the division were dependent and neglected. Of the 7,298 children under care on December 1, 1934, 3,589 were neglected, 3,459 were dependent, 242 were delinquent, and 8 were wayward.

#### Reception of children.

Social investigations were made by the subdivision of investigation before any dependent child was accepted for care by the division of child guardianship. Applications for care of dependent children were made directly to the division of child guardianship and an investigation was made of the need for care and available resources for meeting the problems presented. During the fiscal year 1934 only 455 children were accepted for care from the 1,528 applications considered. Relatives assumed the care of a large number of the children for whom State guardianship seemed unnecessary, and others were accepted for care by private or local public agencies.

The procedure was the same in the acceptance of neglected children and the small number of delinquent children. A court contemplating commitment of a neglected or delinquent child to the department was required to notify the division of child guardianship in order that a representative of the division could be present in court to accept or to show cause for refusal to accept the commitment. If additional information seemed necessary after commitment, this was obtained by the subdivision of investigation.

All children were given the same type of treatment after acceptance, no matter how they had been received. Pending assignment to a visitor for placement in a foster home, the child was cared for in one of the temporary foster homes selected by the division of child guardianship. Seven temporary homes were maintained for children 3 to 12 years of age, six for girls over 12, and three for boys over 12.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 38.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 44.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 52.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, sec. 58.

The average time spent by children in one of these temporary homes before placement was about 3 weeks. While the child was in this temporary home, he was given a physical examination by the doctor on the division staff. If a condition was found that indicated a need for continued medical care, surgery, refraction, dental care, or other treatment, the child was then referred to the proper agency for such service. Although the temporary homes were really only enlarged foster homes, the supervisor of the subdivision using each home supervised its management more closely than other foster homes. Special attention was given to diet and general home management. The division maintained its own nursery for babies, but it was seldom necessary to keep a baby for more than 1 night until placement could be made.

At a monthly staff meeting held by each of the special-age divisions, children were assigned to individual workers for care. Apparently there was no regular system by which assignments were made, except that an attempt was made to keep the case loads of the workers relatively uniform.

The plan for the division of work in the department did not promote consideration of a family as a whole. For instance, a family of four children—a boy 15, a girl 13, a child 8, and a baby 2 years old—would be the responsibility of five workers. The worker from the subdivision of investigation would make the original visit to the home and each child would be assigned to a different subdivision according to his age. The division of child guardianship recognized the value of family ties, and its policy was to place children of the same family in the same home or in the same neighborhood whenever possible. Parents were permitted to visit their children, although they were required to have a permit from the central office for each visit. However, the plan of having the subdivision of investigation responsible for all preliminary and later contacts with the family and other subdivisions responsible for the care of the children made it difficult to develop a coordinated family program. Better coordination might have resulted if the volume of work had not been so heavy as to preclude constructive planning by individual workers.

#### **Home finding and supervision.**

For the most part each worker found foster homes for the children under her care. All applications from persons desiring to care for children went to one worker in the division, who decided whether the application had merit and, if so, referred it for investigation to the supervisor of the subdivision caring for children of the age specified by the applicant. The supervisor in turn passed the application on to the worker in the district in which the home was located. Although the important principles of foster-home investigation were recognized in general and were stated in a "policy book" kept on the desk of the division director, reports of the visitors on the foster homes did not indicate that these principles were always observed in practice. However, it was possible that the visitors had a much more complete knowledge of the attributes of the homes than the reports indicated. Unless the use of a home was discontinued for some reason, no additional information was added to the original record even when a home had been used for years. This meant that

a new worker had to learn for herself the particular strengths and weaknesses of the foster homes in her district.

No attempt was made, except by individual workers, to provide an educational program for foster mothers. Group meetings had not been held, although about two-thirds of the children under care of the division were in boarding homes and a fairly large number of boarding homes were often concentrated in one town. It had always been a principle of the division that the financial return to boarding homes should be secondary to the service to the children, but it was apparent that in some of the boarding homes used by the department the board paid for the child's care was a primary motive. This was shown by the increase in the number of available boarding homes in less prosperous times. It should be noted, however, that a very happy relation existed between many of the children and the foster parents, and it was not unusual for a child to remain in the same home over long periods of time so that he became, for all practical purposes, a member of the family.

Each child was given a complete outfit from the clothing room in the central office when he was first placed in a foster home. After that the foster mother was paid a clothing allowance of \$4 a quarter for a child under 3 years old, \$5 for a child from 3 to 6, and \$8 for a child over 6. An additional allowance was given every other year for a winter coat or suit. A special allowance of \$15 was made to purchase clothing for graduation from high school. Certain other additional expenses were allowed for the children, such as two hair-cuts each quarter, tooth brushes and tooth powder, and medical supplies. For infants provision was made for any food that had to be purchased from a drug store.

The need for economy during the economic depression made it necessary to reduce the regular rate paid for board from \$4 to \$3.50 a week for infants and from \$3.50 to \$3 for children over 3. However, at the time the Children's Bureau representative visited the State in 1934, \$6 a week was being paid in one home for children who had special physical disabilities. Foster mothers caring for children under 3 were paid monthly, but others were paid quarterly.

Children under the age of 3 were supervised by nurses instead of social workers, as it was felt that physical care was of greater importance for this group. On November 30, 1934, 438 children under 3 years of age were under care, and 734 children under 3 had been cared for during the year. Each nurse had about 100 children under her supervision. She visited each child once a month to observe his food, clothing, development, and general health and welfare. It was the policy of this subdivision not to place more than four children in one foster home, and when it was necessary to have as many as four in one home not to have more than two of the children under 2 years of age. When a child reached the age of 3 years he was given a second general physical examination and transferred to the visitor who cared for the next older group of children so that he could be placed in another foster home.

The group composed of children 3 to 12 years old was the largest group under the care of the division of child guardianship, the number on December 1, 1934, being 3,576. The average case load of each visitor was about 180; the largest was 195 and the smallest 121. The



visitor made quarterly visits to each home and saw the child, the foster home, and, the teacher if the child was in school. Each worker was in the field only 4 days a week, but it was necessary for her to visit about 40 children a week in order to keep her work up to date, with the result that some visits were of necessity very brief. It was unusual for a child to be left in the same foster home after he reached the age of 3 and was transferred to the subdivision caring for the next age group, but it was not uncommon for him to remain in the same foster home after he reached the age of 12, even though he was transferred to the supervision of another agent.

Boys over 12 years of age were under the care of the subdivision of older boys, and girls over 12 were under the care of the subdivision of older girls. On November 30, 1934, 1,734 boys over 12 and 1,550 girls over 12 were under care. The average case load of visitors in the subdivision of boys was 118, in the subdivision of girls, slightly less than 100. It was the policy of the division not to pay board for normal children over 14 years of age, but the difficulty of finding work for them had necessitated payment of board for a number of children, sometimes up to the age of 16 years. Every effort was made to keep the older children in school as long as they could profit by additional schooling. On December 1, 1934, 336 boys and 332 girls were attending high school, special vocational schools, continuation schools, evening schools, or college.

#### **Placement for adoption.**

State wards placed for adoption were supervised by one worker in the division of child guardianship. Three classes of children were placed in adoptive homes: Dependent children whose custody had been voluntarily relinquished by parents or guardians; deserted children who had been under care for 2 years and whose parents had not been located; and neglected children in whom the parents showed no interest and who had been under the care of the State for at least 2 years. As a rule foundlings were also kept 2 years before adoption was considered, although they were sometimes placed in adoptive homes before 2 years had expired. Children who were to be available for adoption were referred by the visitors of the different subdivisions to the adoption worker, who made an investigation to determine whether or not adoption was desirable and if so placed the child in the adoptive home best suited to his needs. The investigation of an adoptive home was somewhat more extensive than the investigations of foster boarding homes but emphasis was placed on the physical aspects of the home and the economic status of the family. A good deal of dependence was placed on written references, although a few persons given as references were usually seen.

The division usually insisted that a child be in a home for at least a year before final adoption was permitted. Occasionally children placed to board were later sought for adoption by the foster parents. When this happened, the case was immediately transferred to the adoption worker, who made the final decision. During the year ended November 30, 1934, 29 adoptions of State wards were completed.

#### **Medical care.**

Medical care for State wards was provided in several ways. As a general rule, children in foster homes were treated by local physicians,

the foster mother calling the physician of her choice. No schedule of fees had been adopted, but an effort was made to prevent bills from becoming exorbitant. The subdivision caring for infants made a practice of investigating the medical records of physicians selected by the foster mothers in order to make sure that they were in good standing, but this was not usually done by the other subdivisions. Whenever practicable, children who needed prolonged medical care or surgical treatment were sent to the Massachusetts Hospital School at Canton. Children needing intensive treatment for venereal disease were sent to the State infirmary at Tewksbury. The infirmary also provided care for pregnant girls, for children with tuberculosis and chronic diseases, and for feeble-minded children who could neither be admitted to the State schools for the feeble-minded nor cared for in boarding homes. The services of local dentists were used, but the approval of the division of child guardianship was required in advance for dental work costing more than \$5. Most refractions were cared for by an oculist in Boston.

#### **Cost of maintenance.**

The appropriation for 1934 for care and maintenance of State wards amounted to \$1,400,000.<sup>86</sup> Although it was necessary to include a deficiency item in the 1934 appropriation for expenditures made in 1933, this amount probably approximated actual State expenditures, because funds collected from parents and from cities and towns were paid into the State treasury rather than into the fund available to the department. Cities and towns were responsible for the maintenance of dependent children committed to the State who had legal settlement in the city or town. The State paid for the care of neglected and delinquent children committed to the department of public welfare and for dependent children who had no legal settlement.<sup>87</sup> If parents or relatives were able to pay for the support of children, they were expected to do so. During the fiscal year 1934 the department collected \$22,221 from parents and relatives and \$186,458 from the cities and towns. The department did not report serious delinquencies in payment, so that apparently no great difficulty was experienced in making collections from the cities and towns.

In addition to board and medical care the department paid for the tuition of every child under its care who attended the public schools of the State. The tuition charge varied from \$1 to \$3 a week, depending upon the school costs of the respective cities or towns. During 1933 and 1934 an annual appropriation of \$300,000 was made to the department for this purpose. This represented the lowest amount possible to meet expenditures for the year. In fact, the 1934 appropriation act carried a deficiency item of \$861.46 for expenditures made in 1933.<sup>88</sup>

#### **Records.**

The records of all children from one family accepted by or committed to the division of child guardianship were kept in one folder. The report of the family investigation made by the subdivision of investigation was made on blue sheets so that it might be readily

<sup>86</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for the Year Ending November 30, 1933, p. 70. Public Document No. 17. Boston.

<sup>87</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, secs. 38, 45, 58, 76.

<sup>88</sup> Laws of 1934, ch. 162, p. 33 (item 487) and p. 46.

distinguished from the records of individual children. A visible index contained cards for all children cared for since its installation, about 10 years before this study was made. Records were restricted to the briefest possible recital of conditions found and undoubtedly failed to give much of the information possessed by the worker. Insufficient stenographic service was probably to a great extent responsible for the brevity of the records, because visitors were allowed only an hour a week for dictation of records and correspondence.

#### SUPERVISION OF PUBLIC SERVICES FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN

##### **Mothers' aid (aid to dependent children).**

Assistance to mothers with dependent children was accepted as a public responsibility in Massachusetts in 1913,<sup>89</sup> after a report on the support of dependent minor children of widowed mothers made by a commission appointed in 1912.<sup>90</sup> Administration of mothers' aid was made the responsibility of local boards of public welfare, but the cities and towns were reimbursed by the State to the extent of one-third of the amount paid to each family if the mother had a local settlement and for the entire amount paid to each family if the mother had no local settlement.<sup>91</sup> On November 30, 1934, 4,123 families were receiving aid, of which about 85 percent had local settlement. Reimbursement was made to the cities and towns annually. For new cases reimbursement was made from the time aid was given by the local board, not from the time the grant was approved by the State, but was not allowed for more than 10 days prior to the mailing of the local board's notice of application. Bills from the cities and towns were due on the first of each October.

In addition to administering State funds, which involved investigation of each family before acceptance for State aid, the subdivision of mothers' aid supervised the care given by the local boards and was required by the statutes to visit each family at least twice a year. Since there were only 11 visitors in the subdivision, each visitor was responsible for 400 families. Because of the large case load in Boston, four visitors were assigned there. Policies and rules governing the conditions under which State aid could be granted had been adopted from time to time by the advisory board of the State department. These covered such matters as eligibility, desertion, money possessed or property owned by applicant, provision for emergencies, insurance and burial expenses, medical aid, male lodgers, illegitimate children, aid to a mother with one child, part-time work, type of aid and methods of disbursement, and adequacy of aid. The subdivision recommended the use of a family budget that took into consideration not only the number of persons in the family, but also the health, age, and capabilities of each member, the former standard of living of the family, and the standards of self-supporting families in the neighborhood in which the applicant lived.

Applications for mothers' aid were made directly to the local boards of public welfare, and relief could be given immediately, although before reimbursement each case had to be approved by the department

<sup>89</sup> Laws of 1913, ch. 763.

<sup>90</sup> Under chapter 82 of the Resolves of 1912.

<sup>91</sup> Chapter 413, Laws of 1936, amended the mothers' aid law to bring it into conformity with the provisions of the Social Security Act for aid to dependent children. On September 26, 1936, the Massachusetts plan for aid to dependent children was approved by the Social Security Board.

of public welfare. After notice of an application a State worker made an investigation of the needs and resources of the family, and then on the basis of a carefully drawn budget made a recommendation to the local board. The department did not have power to compel a board of public welfare to increase the amount of aid given to a family, even when the family received State aid only, but an effort was made to persuade the board to give adequate relief. Grants were paid weekly and were relatively adequate. As the law set no limit on the amount that could be given, a liberal interpretation was the rule, and not infrequently the regular weekly grant was supplemented by aid to meet certain emergency needs, such as burial expenses for a child, medical care, extra bedding, or other necessities not covered by the grant. Fuel and rent allowances were made quite often, in addition to the weekly cash grant. Occasionally when a mother was first granted aid the living conditions of the family made a fairly large initial expenditure necessary in order to establish a satisfactory home.

Boards of public welfare were expected to see that each mother receiving aid was visited quarterly, either by one of their own members or by a duly appointed agent. A record of this visit was kept in the files of the board and a report was sent to the State office. In the cities paid employees were appointed to administer mothers' aid and supervise the families. In the towns the number of mothers aided was usually not large, and the board members often knew them personally and had a real interest in them.

#### **Children boarded at local expense.**

Cities and towns were required to report to the department of public welfare all children placed out in family homes at local expense and all children in city and town infirmaries, and it was the duty of the department to visit such children at least once a year. This duty was assigned to the visitors in the division of child guardianship, who made the "town visits" in the course of their supervision of State wards. The result of this plan was that some of the visitors were required to make many more visits than others, depending on the extent to which the individual towns had placed children. All visitors had heavy case loads, and the additional burden of inspecting local placements necessarily had one of two results—either their work for State wards was neglected or the inspections were superficial. When a particularly unsatisfactory condition was found, the visitor usually discussed it with the board of public welfare in the town, and the director of the division wrote later to the local officials, urging that other plans be made for the child. The visitors made brief reports of the inspections on special blanks, from which the commissioner's statistical department compiled certain facts for the annual report of the department. During the fiscal year ended November 30, 1934, 2,167 children outside the infirmaries and 90 children in infirmaries were visited.

#### **SUPERVISION OF PRIVATE AGENCIES**

##### **Incorporation of charitable organizations.**

The department of public welfare, through the subdivision of private incorporated charities, was required by law <sup>92</sup> to investigate all

<sup>92</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1930, ch. 180, sec. 6.

applications of charitable agencies for certificates of incorporation and to make a report to the State secretary. Upon the receipt of an application for incorporation the State secretary decided from the information given whether or not it was for a charitable organization and, if so, referred the application to the department of public welfare. The statutes limited the investigation of the department to a determination of the suitability of the applicant and of the purposes of the proposed incorporation. Accordingly the department had concluded that a consideration of the need for the organization could not be included in the investigation or in the recommendation to the State secretary. The State secretary had authority to grant a charter in spite of the disapproval of the department of public welfare, but this rarely happened if the department had adequate facts in support of its recommendations. Not until 1934 was a case appealed to the Supreme Court after the State secretary had refused to grant a charter. A charter granted could not be revoked, and it was, therefore, to the interest of the Commonwealth that charters be granted with caution.

During 1934, 37 applications for incorporation were acted upon by the secretary of the Commonwealth; 29 of these were granted and 3 were disapproved.

#### **Inspection of private charitable corporations.**

Massachusetts has no special provision for the supervision of institutions and agencies caring for children, such as is provided in the laws of other States. The department of public welfare, however, is responsible for the inspection of all private charitable corporations and is authorized to receive reports of their financial status and activities.<sup>93</sup> During 1934, 1,273 corporations furnished such reports to the department. Only 145 of these were providing services for children. The other corporations were hospitals or other institutions caring for the sick, family-welfare agencies, homes for the aged, and other organizations doing community, neighborhood, or club work. Practically all these agencies had accepted State supervision, but there were only three supervisors in the department and annual visits, in accordance with the law, were impossible. It was estimated that a staff triple the size of the actual one was needed to do the work according to the standards the subdivision had set for its work. During the fiscal year 1934 only 128 agencies were visited. The basis for selecting agencies to be visited was as follows: (1) Agencies that were known to be below standard; (2) agencies to which the attention of the division had been called, either by the agencies themselves or by some interested agency or individual; (3) newly incorporated agencies; and, (4) agencies that at certain times had an especially urgent situation to cope with, such as the problem of relief during the economic depression.

The kind of visits made for inspection differed according to the situation in the agency. The inspection of a small institution or a family agency rarely required more than a few hours, but a visit to a large institution or to an agency having many problems took days and involved numerous conferences with board members, the staff, social agencies, and other interested people.

<sup>93</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 121, sec. 7.

The department did not submit a written report of its findings to the institution or agency visited. This was done at one time, but it created such ill feeling in certain institutions that the plan was discontinued, and reports were open only to the director and the supervisors in the subdivision. However, the findings of a former visit were sometimes discussed during a visit to an institution or agency, and the staff was also willing to discuss the findings of an official visit with representatives of the agency or institution who come to the office for information. The subdivision had extensive information about private social work in the State and often received inquiries not only about particular agencies but about general matters in the field of private charity.

Every charitable corporation was required to make an annual financial return on or before the first day of November, and if for 2 successive years a corporation failed to make such a report, the supreme judicial court upon application of the department had authority to dissolve the corporation.<sup>94</sup> A summary of these financial reports is published in the annual report of the department. These reports give financial data for the institution or agency, the average number of paid employees, and the total number of individuals and families to whom service or relief was given.

#### **Maternity hospitals.**

Prior to 1910 the licensing of maternity hospitals was the responsibility of local boards of health. Legislation passed in 1910, however, made this a duty of the State board of charity, later the department of public welfare.<sup>95</sup> At first the details of licensing were in the hands of the attorney for the division of child guardianship, but in 1920 the work was transferred to a nurse on the staff of the division so that more attention could be paid to the medical standards of hospitals under supervision. At the time of this study the nurse who was the maternity-hospital supervisor was also the supervisor of the subdivision for infants.

Inspections of maternity hospitals were more or less routine. The supervisor noted especially the methods used by the hospital for marking the clothes of an outgoing infant so that they might be used as a means of identification later in case of abandonment and for making reports to the department of public health regarding unhealthy eye conditions of discharged infants. Regulations for maternity hospitals were adopted in 1910 and revised in 1916 and again in 1923. They had been printed on cards so that they could be posted in the hospitals. Shortly before this study was made some additional regulations had been adopted, which included a provision that the licensee of an unincorporated hospital must be a physician in good standing or a graduate of an approved school of nursing. These unincorporated maternity homes constituted a special problem, and as much attention as possible was given to them. The regulations also stated that at least one nurse who was a graduate of an approved school of nursing must be on the premises at all times when a maternity case was in the house. All buildings must be approved by the local board of health; and if there was any doubt about fire hazards, buildings must also be approved by the State department of public safety.

<sup>94</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 180, sec. 12.

<sup>95</sup> Laws of 1910, p. 369.

The statutes prohibited placement of infants for financial returns. A parent or guardian who permitted a child under 2 years of age to be placed in the control of another person for "hire, gain, or reward" could be found guilty of abandonment, and a person receiving a child under 2 years of age for "hire, gain, or reward" could be found guilty of aiding and abetting the abandonment of an infant.<sup>96</sup>

The statutes also required that any person who received an infant under 2 years of age for adoption or care or who accepted such an infant for the purpose of placing him in a home must notify the State department of public welfare.<sup>97</sup> These two measures have been helpful in controlling the activities of maternity hospitals that were inclined to encourage unmarried mothers to give up their babies for adoption.

#### Boarding homes.

As early as 1889 legislation was enacted in Massachusetts providing for the licensing and supervision by the State of boarding homes for infants under 5 years of age.<sup>98</sup> In 1892 the statute was amended to read "under 2 years of age."<sup>99</sup> In 1931 an effort was made to raise the age limit and to remove the words "for compensation" so that State protection might be extended to all children under 7 years of age who were placed in foster homes.<sup>100</sup> The proposed measure failed to pass; therefore, a home unable to meet the requirements for a license to board children under 2 was permitted to receive older children. However, when a child under 7 cared for away from his parents was reported to the department as not receiving proper care, an agent of the department was authorized to investigate the home, and if the agent considered removal necessary to protect the child from neglect or abuse he could be transferred to the custody of the department.<sup>101</sup> Although this provision had been construed to mean such serious neglect or abuse as almost to endanger the life of a child, six children were removed in accordance with it during the fiscal year 1934.

All boarding homes caring for two or more infants under 2 years of age were required to be licensed by the department of public welfare.<sup>102</sup> During the fiscal year 1934, 586 boarding homes in 100 cities and towns of the Commonwealth were licensed to care for children placed by the State department, private agencies, and individuals. Regulations adopted by the department stated that it was not the policy to license any person to care for more than two infants under 2 years of age or to license any person under 20 or over 70 years of age. The regulations also stated that the person licensed should keep a record of the name of every baby received and the name and address of the parents and should report within 2 days the reception and discharge or death of every child under 2 years of age. If the proposed foster home was outside the city of Boston, it had to be approved first by a majority of the members of the local board

<sup>96</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, secs. 9 and 10.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., sec. 14.

<sup>98</sup> Laws of 1889, ch. 416.

<sup>99</sup> Laws of 1892, ch. 318.

<sup>100</sup> Report of the Special Commission Established to Investigate the Laws Relative to Dependent, Delinquent, and Neglected Children, and Children Otherwise Requiring Special Care, p. 156. Mass. House No. 1200. Wright & Potter Co., Boston, 1931. (General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1930, ch. 119, sec. 6.)

<sup>101</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 28.

<sup>102</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, secs. 1-2.

of health. The usual requirements for proper ventilation, sanitation, and facilities for refrigeration of food were also included in the regulations.

Licensed boarding homes were visited by nurses in the division of child guardianship. Semiannual visits were usually made to foster homes caring for children other than State wards, although if there was any suspicion about the type of care given in a home, visits were made more frequently.

Homes boarding only one child were not licensed, but a foster mother receiving a child under 2 years of age was required to notify the department of public welfare of the presence of the child within 2 days after she received him, together with the name, age, residence of the infant, his parents, and the persons from whom and by whom he was received.<sup>103</sup> It was then the duty of the department to visit the home in order to make sure that the child was receiving proper care. As a rule semiannual visits were made to such homes.

#### SERVICES TO SPECIAL GROUPS OF CHILDREN

##### Adoptions.

Although it has been generally agreed that Massachusetts was the first State to provide for legal adoption of children, the early laws did little more than provide legal sanction for the transfer of parental rights.<sup>104</sup> Legislation enacted in 1907<sup>105</sup> provided that notice was to be sent to the State board of charity if the child had been supported by a town or by the State, and in 1915 the law required such notice if the child was of unknown parentage or a foundling.<sup>106</sup> Although these laws applied only to public wards and failed to specify the action to be taken by the State department, it was nevertheless a forward step, since it placed upon the agency that had assumed care of the child the responsibility for his future when permanent separation from his family was involved. As a result of the recommendations made by the special commission concerned with child-welfare legislation, the adoption law was again amended in 1931.<sup>107</sup>

This latest amendment provided that "upon the filing of a petition for adoption of a child under the age of 14, notice shall be given to the department of public welfare which shall make appropriate inquiry to determine the condition and antecedents of the child for the purpose of ascertaining whether he is a proper subject for adoption, and to determine whether the petitioners and their home are suitable for the proper rearing of the child."<sup>108</sup> The provision did not apply "in the case of a petition for adoption presented, sponsored, or recommended by any charitable corporation organized under general or special laws of the Commonwealth for the purpose of engaging in the care of children and principally so engaged."

The probate court in which the petition was filed made the decision as to which agencies were to be exempted, hence practice was

<sup>103</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 6.

<sup>104</sup> Laws of 1851, ch. 324.

<sup>105</sup> Laws of 1907, ch. 405.

<sup>106</sup> Laws of 1915, ch. 53.

<sup>107</sup> Report of the Special Commission Established to Investigate the Laws Relative to Dependent, Delinquent, and Neglected Children, and Children Otherwise Requiring Special Care, p. 224. Mass. House No. 1200. Wright & Potter Co., Boston, 1931. (General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 210, sec. 5A.)

<sup>108</sup> Laws of 1931, ch. 342.



not uniform throughout the State. Some courts referred practically all petitions to the department for investigation; others exempted almost any incorporated agency. As incorporation in Massachusetts did not necessarily mean that an agency had been approved by the department of public welfare, this exemption in the law weakened it considerably.

Investigations in adoption cases were made by the subdivision of adoptions of the division of child guardianship. According to the law the department had 30 days in which to make its investigation and report. This was considered ample time in most cases, but when necessary an extension of time could be granted. The investigation included "clearance" in the social-service exchange; verification of all births, marriages, divorces, and deaths that were in any way related to the adoption proceeding; a visit to the home and interviews with both petitioners; and interviews with some of the persons given as references. No rule had been made about references. Information was usually obtained from the husband's employer, a neighbor of the family, and the minister. In addition the family doctor was often seen. A letter was sent to the court giving the results of the investigation and indicating the attitude of the department in regard to the adoption, but no specific recommendation was made. No provision had been made for an agent of the State department to represent in person the interests of the child in the court proceedings. After the hearing it was the practice of the court to send the department a report of the final action in the form of a copy of the decree, a post-card notice, or in some other form adopted by an individual court.

During the fiscal year 1934, 707 investigations were completed, with the following results:

Approved .....	651
Disapproved .....	54
Withdrawn after investigation .....	2

Disapproval by the State department did not always affect the decision of the court. Nevertheless the experience of the department showed the great value of this service, as during the 2½ years in which the law had been in operation investigations disclosed undesirable conditions in approximately 9 percent of the proposed adoptions.

#### **Children of illegitimate birth.**

The department of public welfare gave case-work services to children of illegitimate birth only when they were wards of the department or had been born in the State infirmary. The need for public protection for these children was recognized as early as 1889, when a law was enacted requiring any person receiving a child under the age of 3 years for board to notify the State board of health, lunacy, and charity if the child was of illegitimate birth.<sup>109</sup> This provision was extended in recent laws to include all children under 7 placed in homes for board or for adoption, and the department was authorized to visit the homes to see that proper care was given.<sup>110</sup> However, the department assumed no responsibility for planning for the

<sup>109</sup> Laws of 1889, ch. 309. 1899, ch. 276 (General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 20).

<sup>110</sup> Laws of 1931, ch. 195 (General Laws (Ter. Ed.) ch. 119, secs. 22 and 28).

child born out of wedlock unless it accepted guardianship because of neglect or inadequate care.

Maternity care was given in a building of the State infirmary at Tewksbury. During the fiscal year 1934, 178 women and girls were given care, most of whom were unmarried mothers. Nearly half of them had been transferred from other State institutions, including the reformatory for women, the State industrial school for girls, the State school for the feeble-minded, and the defective-delinquent colony. All mothers were kept at the infirmary long enough to give the baby a good physical start and until a satisfactory social plan could be worked out for both mother and child. Responsibility for social planning for unmarried mothers and the initiation of proceedings to establish paternity of children born in the State infirmary was divided between the social workers of the division of aid and relief and the staff of the institution from which the girls or women had been transferred for care.

The reformatory for women maintained a nursery for children born during the incarceration of the mother, and children were transferred there from the infirmary. Social services for these children were provided by the social workers of the reformatory. The industrial school for girls had no provision for infants. When court action seemed advisable to establish the paternity of a child, the executive secretary of the division of juvenile training initiated proceedings. Often the permanent separation of a child from a young mother seemed desirable, and the child was transferred from the infirmary to the care of the division of guardianship.

The social-service unit of the division of aid and relief accepted responsibility for social planning for all other mothers of children born out of wedlock who were under care at the infirmary. Statutory authority had been given to the department of public welfare to institute action in cases of illegitimacy if the indigent mother had no settlement in the State.<sup>111</sup> An attorney on the staff of the department represented the child throughout the entire legal proceeding.

## SERVICES FOR DELINQUENT CHILDREN

### INSTITUTIONAL CARE

Institutional care for delinquent children committed by the courts began in Massachusetts in 1847 with the founding of the State reform school for delinquent boys, now known as the Lyman school for boys.<sup>112</sup> This institution was followed by a similar one for delinquent girls in 1854, called the industrial school for girls.<sup>113</sup> In 1908 a second institution for delinquent boys was established, the industrial school for boys.<sup>114</sup>

The three schools and the parole service which constitute the division of training of the department of public welfare are under the control of the trustees of the Massachusetts training schools.<sup>115</sup> Boys and girls committed to the schools remain under the jurisdic-

<sup>111</sup> General Laws 1931, ch. 121, sec. 8.

<sup>112</sup> Laws of 1847, ch. 165; Laws of 1884, ch. 323 (changed the name from State reform school to the Lyman school for boys).

<sup>113</sup> Laws of 1854, ch. 52, made an appropriation for the establishment of a State reform school for girls. Laws of 1855, ch. 18, provided for incorporation of the institution as the industrial school for girls.

<sup>114</sup> Laws of 1908, ch. 639.

<sup>115</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 120.

tion of the school until they become 21, unless previously paroled, transferred, or discharged. The two schools for boys are differentiated on an age basis, the Lyman school accepting boys under 15 years of age and the industrial school accepting boys over 15 but under 18 years of age. The girls' industrial school accepts girls under 17 years of age. The length of time that boys or girls remain in the institutions varies somewhat in the different schools. The average period of residence of boys paroled for the first time was reported in 1934 as about 13 months in the Lyman school and about 9 months in the boys' industrial school. The girls in the girls' industrial school remained for a longer time, averaging about 1 year and 9 months.<sup>116</sup>

The programs of all the schools emphasized coordination of academic and vocational training and individualization in training to meet the particular needs of each boy and girl. During 1934 the educational program of the Lyman school was completely reorganized in order to reduce the size of classes, to provide for individualized work in tutoring classes, and to broaden the experience of the boys through increasing the amount of nonacademic instruction given. Specific vocational skills were emphasized in the training of older boys and girls. Special attention and careful direction was given to recreational activities in all the schools.

Parole services were provided through two divisions, the boys' parole branch and the girls' parole branch. Applications for parole were submitted to the board of trustees by the executive secretary, and a decision was reached by the board on recommendations made by a subcommittee on paroles. As soon as possible after a child's commitment to any one of the institutions, a member of the parole staff made a visit to the child's home to investigate the conditions leading to his commitment. This information, with a cumulative record of the child's behavior at the training school and a report of the physical and mental studies made at the institution, served as the basis for the subcommittee's recommendations and the board's decision with regard to parole.

In planning for parole, emphasis was placed on the needs of the particular boy or girl. A large proportion of the boys and girls were paroled to their own families or to relatives. Foster homes were used for those having no home or when the situation in the homes or the supervision given was not desirable. In 1934 about a fifth of the boys and girls paroled for the first time were placed in foster homes where they earned part-time or full-time wages. Another group of 129 younger boys and 6 girls had been placed in boarding homes. The board of one girl was paid by her mother but clothing was furnished by the girls' parole board. A special appropriation was made to the boys' parole branch for board for boys from the Lyman school. Board was paid from the general fund of the girls' parole branch for the few girls placed in boarding homes. The division also had funds available to pay tuition for boys and girls in foster homes who attended school. Parole supervision was continued until the boy or girl reached the age of 21 years, unless he was honorably discharged

<sup>116</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 52-56. Boston.

because of satisfactory behavior or some other provision for care had been made.

The board of trustees is authorized to encourage boys and girls on parole to save from their earnings and to hold such savings in safe-keeping for their use. A portion of the earnings of each child in a wage home was sent to the division and deposited in a savings account for the child. The interest that had accumulated from unclaimed savings accounts of children had been used to establish a trust fund. This was occasionally drawn on to assist a child on parole who had ability and wished to obtain further education or trade training.

#### PROBATION

The board of probation, an independent board, was created in 1903 to further the development of probation throughout the Commonwealth through conferences and uniform reporting and to maintain a central register of all persons placed on probation and their subsequent police, court, and prison histories, for the exchange of information between the courts. Additional authority was given to the board a few years later to supervise the probation work for wayward and delinquent children and to make recommendations in its annual report for the improvement of methods of dealing with such children.<sup>117</sup> No special supervisor of juvenile probation had been appointed, however, and the activities of the board in developing standards of probation were the same for all courts. Juvenile cases have constituted about 10 percent of the total cases of persons placed on probation reported annually to the board.<sup>118</sup>

Probation officers in Massachusetts are appointed by the court they serve. The board of probation had no authority to select or remove such officers, and it could not require that appointments be made according to prescribed qualifications.<sup>119</sup> However, through visits to the courts, assistance to judges in finding qualified persons to serve as probation officers, regional conferences, and public addresses the standards for probation officers in the State had gradually improved.

Although the commissioner of probation realized that field service was essential in the development of satisfactory probation work throughout the State, relatively little field service was available. An assistant commissioner at one time spent most of his time in field work, but when he was appointed commissioner, a new assistant commissioner was not appointed, and the only field service was that given through visits of the commissioner. An effort was made to visit each newly appointed probation officer as soon as possible to interpret the philosophy of probation work and to apply it to practical problems. Subsequent to this visit the officer spent part of a day in the central office. In this way he was helped to obtain an idea of the State organization and the necessary and vital part each officer had in the development of a preventive and reconstructive program.

<sup>117</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 119, sec. 64.

<sup>118</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Board of Probation for the Year Ending September 30, 1934, p. 6. Boston.

<sup>119</sup> Laws of 1926, ch. 360, strengthened the provisions relating to appointment of probation officers by requiring that all courts, except the Boston juvenile court, must have such appointments approved by the administrative committee of the district courts after consultation with the board of probation.

**SERVICES FOR MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND PROBLEM CHILDREN****DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE**

A subdivision for mentally deficient children was responsible for children referred to the division of child guardianship as dependent or neglected and later found to be feeble-minded. During the year ended November 30, 1934, this subdivision had cared for 401 feeble-minded children, and at the close of the fiscal year 309 children remained under care, of whom 170 were in foster homes, 26 were wage earners, and 113, who could not be placed in the community, were being cared for in hospitals while awaiting commitment to State schools for the feeble-minded.

The subdivision had been successful in developing specialized boarding homes for mentally deficient children. Usually 3 to 5 children were placed in a single home, although two particularly successful homes cared for as many as 10 children. Board was paid at the rate of \$3.50 a week. Although these boarding homes were scattered over the entire State, an attempt was made to have them situated in communities that provided special classes for subnormal children. One of the greatest difficulties the subdivision had was the lack of cooperation of some local authorities in providing educational opportunities for these children. In some towns the school authorities were unwilling to provide a special class unless the total number of children required for such a class were residents of the town. In others, when special classes had been formed, the subdivision was asked to withdraw the State wards in order to lighten the load of the teacher.

The boys and girls who were employed received wages varying from \$2 to \$10 a week. Through the cooperation of the employer with the social worker from the division a financial plan was made for each child in accordance with the amount of his earnings. Provision was made whenever possible for the child to have an allowance for his own use, money for necessary clothing and other incidentals, and a monthly bank deposit. When a child became 21 his bank book was placed in charge of the person or organization that assumed the responsibility for continued supervision.

As a result of the activities of this subdivision some children made a sufficiently satisfactory adjustment in the community so that institutionalization was not necessary. For others commitment was essential and periodical application for their admission was made to the State schools for the mentally deficient. However, in spite of the continued efforts of the subdivision, only 69 children were accepted by the schools during 1934. Commitment to these institutions was made by the probate court but as a rule was not arranged for until the division had been notified that there was a place in the institution for the child.

An effort was made to have a definite plan worked out for each child before he was 21 years old and would be discharged from care. When institutional care was not needed, an attempt was made to provide supervision through either placement with responsible relatives or referral to the department of mental diseases.

**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL DISEASES**

The department of mental diseases has major responsibility for services for mentally deficient children, including institutional care

and training, supervision of persons paroled from the institution, and community supervision of children and young persons who can remain outside of an institution.

#### **Institutional care of mentally defective children.**

Three institutions have been established in Massachusetts to provide care for mentally deficient persons. The institution at Waverly, now known as the Walter E. Fernald State School, was opened in South Boston in 1848<sup>120</sup> and was one of the first State institutions for the mentally deficient established in the United States. Because of increasing demands for institutional care, the erection of an institution at Wrentham was authorized in 1906, and similar authority was given for an institution in Belchertown in 1918.<sup>121</sup> These institutions are designated as schools, a name particularly applicable since a large proportion of the admissions are of children. Although about 55 percent of the 4,993 persons in these schools on November 30, 1934, were 20 years of age or older, nearly two-thirds of them were less than 15 years of age at the time of their admission. An analysis of the ages of persons on the waiting list for institutional care made at this same time showed a similar proportion of young children among those listed.<sup>122</sup>

Parole of mentally deficient persons from the schools was given statutory sanction in 1922,<sup>123</sup> although parole had been used by 1918 in both of the schools then existent.<sup>124</sup> Supervision of paroled persons was the responsibility of the staff of the social-service division of each school, which in 1934 consisted of three social workers at the Fernald school and at the school in Belchertown and two social workers at the school at Wrentham. In addition to giving supervision to the 247 persons on parole on September 30, 1934, the social-work staff of the schools was also responsible for making investigations and for social services for persons remaining in the schools. In order to supplement the supervision of paroled persons given by the State staff, local agencies or persons willing to give such service were called upon to give the friendly assistance, direction, and leadership that the mental defective needs and wishes to have.

Parole was seldom used for children, although some of them returned to their homes for visits. Children able to profit from class work often had short vacations at home, but for the greater part of the year they were kept in school. Even when formal school work had terminated parole was not granted until stable habits were established. On September 30, 1934, 106 children under 20 years of age were away from the institution, 40 of whom were classified as idiots or imbeciles.<sup>125</sup>

#### **Community supervision of mentally defective children.**

The State department of mental diseases is authorized to accept guardianship of mentally deficient persons committed to the custody

<sup>120</sup> Laws of 1848, ch. 65 of the Resolves; 1850, ch. 150; 1883, ch. 239 (changed the name to the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-Minded).

<sup>121</sup> Laws of 1906, ch. 38; Laws of 1918, ch. 224.

<sup>122</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Commissioner of Mental Diseases for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 110, 434.

<sup>123</sup> Laws of 1922, ch. 337.

<sup>124</sup> Davies, Stanley Powell: *Social Control of the Mentally Deficient*, p. 203. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1930.

<sup>125</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Commissioner of Mental Diseases for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 447-448.

of the department for community supervision.<sup>126</sup> The department is also authorized to accept for supervision persons whose guardians voluntarily ask for such services. Commitment for supervision was seldom used except for mentally deficient wards of the department of public welfare who had reached the age of 21 years. Of the 192 persons under supervision at the end of 1934, only 17 were legal wards of the department. The supervision of persons accepted on a voluntary basis had been found to be the most satisfactory plan, since the cooperation of relatives was assured by the conditions of acceptance.

At the time of the visit in 1934 the group under supervision of the two social workers on the staff of the division of mental diseases consisted of older girls who had been placed in the wage homes.<sup>127</sup> Careful investigations were made of prospective homes for these girls. The employer's understanding of the girl's needs and limitations and the opportunity afforded by the home for development of her particular abilities were considered of major importance in selecting a home. Special attention had been given, during supervisory visits, to the recreational activities and to the companionships of the girls under supervision.

#### Traveling school clinics.

The Massachusetts system of traveling psychiatric school clinics for the examination of retarded children is without doubt the most extensive of any State in the Union. The first clinic was sent out from the Waverly school on December 15, 1914. In 1917 the second traveling clinic was sent out from the school at Wrentham. It soon became evident that these two clinics could not examine all the retarded children in the public schools of the State, and in 1921 traveling clinics were organized to operate from each of the 14 institutions under the department of mental diseases. Another clinic was added in January 1928.

The operation of these clinics in the public-school system was legalized by the enactment of a law in 1919. This law was amended by the legislature in 1922 and again in 1931. In its present form it provides that—

The school committee of every town shall annually ascertain, under regulations prescribed by the department [of education] and the department of mental diseases, the number of children 3 years or more retarded in mental development in attendance upon its public schools, or of school age and resident therein. At the beginning of each school year, the committee of every town where there are 10 or more such children shall establish special classes for their instruction according to their mental attainments, under regulations prescribed by the department [of education]. A child appearing to be mentally retarded in any less degree may, upon request of the superintendent of schools of the town where he attends school, be examined under such regulations as may be prescribed by the department [of education] and the department of mental diseases. No child under the control of the department of public welfare or of the child-welfare division of the institutions department of the city of Boston, who is 3 years or more retarded in mental development within the meaning of this section, shall, after complaint made by the school committee to the department of public welfare or said division,

<sup>126</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 123, sec. 66A. (Enacted 1921, ch. 441, and amended 1924, ch. 88.)

<sup>127</sup> By 1937 the program of community supervision had been expanded to include younger children remaining in their own homes. Educational services to the parents of the children and home teaching of children excluded from the schools were undertaken.

be placed in a town which is not required to maintain a special class as provided for in this section.<sup>128</sup>

In the beginning only children who were 3 or more years retarded were eligible for examination, but in 1931 the law was amended so that any "child appearing to be mentally retarded in any less degree" could be examined upon the request of the superintendent of schools of the town where he attended school. Accordingly, examination for two important groups was made possible: (1) Children retarded only 1 or 2 years in school work; and (2) children presenting behavior problems that interfered with their school progress.

Each traveling clinic has a psychiatrist in charge, assisted by a psychologist or psychometrist, and usually by a social worker. During 1934, clinics were held in 221 cities, towns, and villages. Although about three-fourths of the 8,237 children examined in these clinics were referred for examination because of retardation, the report of the division of mental diseases showed that an increasing proportion of the children were being sent to the clinics for such problems as difficulty with school work and conduct and personality difficulties.<sup>129</sup>

The laws relating to public education require the school committee of every town in which reside 10 or more children who are retarded 3 or more years in school work to establish special classes for their instruction.<sup>130</sup> The work of the traveling school clinics has been a significant factor in demonstrating the need for such classes in the cities and towns where clinics have been held. Special classes were available for retarded children in most of the cities and larger towns visited in 1934, 313 special classes providing for 5,169 pupils having been established. Some of the towns providing special classes had a grade-school enrollment of fewer than 200 children.<sup>131</sup> No State aid is available to assist cities and towns in meeting the extra cost of these classes. The average cost of education in the public schools was estimated in 1933 as \$90.40 a year for a pupil in the regular classes and \$130 a year for a pupil in special classes for retarded children.<sup>132</sup>

#### Child-guidance clinics.

Since 1922 the division of mental hygiene of the department of mental diseases has conducted child-guidance clinics for preschool children and children of school age. This service is given at clinics (designated as habit clinics) held in different localities and at one permanent clinic in which research is carried on. During 1934 weekly clinics were held in three localities in the Boston area and in five other cities in the eastern section of the State. A semimonthly clinic was held also at the State sanitarium for tubercular children. The staff of a habit clinic consisted of a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a psychiatric social worker. More than three-fourths of the children seen in the clinics during 1934 had been given comprehensive treatment by the clinic staff and follow-up work by the five psychiatric social workers who were giving full-time services to the clinics.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>128</sup> Laws of 1919, ch. 277 as am. 1922, ch. 231, and 1931, ch. 358, and 1919, ch. 318 (Gen. Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 71, sec. 46, and ch. 123, sec. 12).

<sup>129</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Commission of Mental Diseases for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 87, 88.

<sup>130</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 71, sec. 46.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 95-102.

<sup>132</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Department of Education: Survey of Special Education for Atypical Children, January 1, 1934, pp. 1, 3-6. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>133</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Commission of Mental Diseases for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 60-61.



Emphasis had been placed by the division on parent education in the treatment of individual cases and in the general educational work done with groups interested in problems of childhood. The treatment given to children was broad in scope, including the development of cooperative services with a wide variety of other agencies. Specialists on the staff were also undertaking services for children having speech defects or reading disabilities.

## SERVICES FOR PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

### CRIPPLED CHILDREN

In 1934 State services for crippled children were largely centered in the department of public welfare, although some children who were crippled and had other disabilities were under care in the hospitals administered by other State departments.<sup>134</sup> Special training for a few older crippled children was provided by the division of vocational rehabilitation of the department of education, but other educational facilities for these children were provided by local school committees.

#### Massachusetts hospital school.

The Massachusetts hospital school consists of a school department for the care and education of crippled and deformed children who are mentally competent to attend school and a hospital department which provides medical and surgical care for crippled children and for minor wards of the department of welfare who need hospital care. On November 30, 1934, there were 255 crippled children in the school and 13 minor wards of the department in the hospital. The period of care of minor wards is relatively short, 214 having been admitted and 230 discharged during the year, whereas many of the crippled children remain in the school as long as they are of school age, a few remaining until they are 21 years of age.<sup>135</sup> Academic instruction in the school was given only through the eighth grade, but in a few selected cases vocational and clerical work of high-school grade was provided. However, training was not limited to the classroom, and the development of proper mental habits was one of the primary aims of the school. Emphasis was placed also on the development of recreational interests and handicraft activities. Active participation in games and sports was encouraged by the physiotherapist, who also gave individual treatment to the children needing physiotherapy. Medical and surgical treatment played an important part in the institutional program. The superintendent of the school and one member of the board of trustees were physicians, and a competent staff of nurses and doctors was employed. Dental care was provided during the child's stay in the institution. Although the institution had no follow-up service for children, an active alumni association did a great deal for children who had been in the institution.

Parents able to pay for the care and education of children in the school are required to do so. The maintenance cost of dependent

<sup>134</sup> Under the Social Security Act, Federal funds are made available to assist the States in the development of services for crippled children. The State department of public health is cooperating with the United States Children's Bureau in this program.

<sup>135</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, pp. 49, 50.

crippled children having legal settlement is paid by the city or town of residence, the amount paid not to exceed \$6 a week. The entire cost of care of crippled children having no legal settlement is paid by the Commonwealth.<sup>136</sup>

#### School census.

In 1929 the department of public welfare made a survey of crippled children to find the number of crippled children needing care and the extent of need for further educational provisions for children unable to attend school. During the progress of the survey the legislature enacted a law requiring the cities and towns to take an annual census of crippled children under regulations prescribed by the department of public welfare. In 1932 the word "crippled" was changed to "physically handicapped," thus extending the benefits of the law to children suffering from cardiac disease and other physical handicaps that make it impossible for them to attend regular public-school classes. In addition, the law made it mandatory for the cities and towns to provide special instruction for these children when there were more than five children in a city or town and permissive for them to provide such instruction when there were fewer than five children. Instruction could be given in the child's own home or at "such places and under such conditions as the committee may arrange."<sup>137</sup>

The supervisor of the subdivision of social service for crippled children in the department of public welfare directed the taking of the annual census and made recommendations regarding the care and treatment of the children reported. Investigations were made of all children reported in the census and of a few others for whom reports were received in other ways. From the information obtained recommendations were made to educational authorities as to the need for special educational opportunities, and children needing but not receiving medical care or social services were referred to the proper agency for care. During 1934, reports of 1,080 physically handicapped children were investigated, of whom 498 were crippled children. Many of the crippled children were attending regular school classes and others were under the care of special agencies. Recommendations for home teaching were made for 210 children who were temporarily unable to attend school or who were so seriously crippled that home teaching was the only educational opportunity for them.<sup>138</sup>

The supervisor of crippled-children services also gave time to a general educational program. An effort was made to reach all teachers engaged in the work of teaching children in their homes in order that the education, social-service work, and physical care might be coordinated and that close cooperation might be developed among all persons interested in a child's general welfare. A course of lectures on "understanding the crippled child" was arranged for these teachers and for others interested in the work of crippled children by the division of university extension with the supervisor of the subdivision of crippled children as leader of the course. Lectures were given by physicians prominent in the field of medicine and orthopedic surgery.

<sup>136</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 121, sec. 31.

<sup>137</sup> Laws of 1930, ch. 368. Amended by Laws of 1932, ch. 159.

<sup>138</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare for the Year Ending November 3, 1934, pp. 35, 36.

### Educational opportunities.

Education for crippled children and children with other physical handicaps who are unable to attend school was available through instruction given in their own homes. In a survey of special education for atypical children made in 1933 it was found that 39 cities and towns were employing 94 visiting teachers for home instruction of 598 physically handicapped children.<sup>139</sup> Special classes in the public schools for children able to attend school but needing special physical care were also available in a few of the cities.<sup>140</sup>

The section of vocational rehabilitation of the department of education had maintained close cooperation with the Massachusetts hospital school and the supervisor of social services for crippled children and had provided vocational training and placement services for a few crippled children 16 years of age or older who needed such service. When possible the bureau preferred to have information about the child early in his high-school course, because it was often possible to relate the high-school instruction to later training.

### BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN

Although Massachusetts has no State schools for the instruction of blind or deaf children, State funds are available for the care and education of these children. The department of education administers these funds, which are used for the board and tuition of children in private boarding schools for blind or deaf children and for the tuition of deaf children attending the Horace Mann school, a special day school in Boston, or in special classes established by the department in other localities. The statutes authorize the department of education to provide instruction for these children for a period not exceeding 10 years, but this time may be extended for meritorious pupils on the recommendation of school officials.<sup>141</sup>

#### Blind children.

Blind children were given care and education in Perkins Institution and Massachusetts School for the Blind, a private boarding school founded in 1829. The cost of board and tuition paid by the State in 1934 was \$600 per pupil, but parents, if financially able to do so, reimbursed the State for the cost of board in part or in full, the cost to the parents in no case exceeding \$6 per week.

The division of the blind in the department of education was established in 1906 to provide services for blind persons and to assist in the prevention of blindness and the conservation of eyesight.<sup>142</sup> The division maintained a register of blind persons which on November 30, 1934, included 571 minors, of whom 53 were under 5 years of age.<sup>143</sup> The division provided a great variety of services for children who were blind or had defective vision. It arranged for the admission of children to Perkins Institution and cooperated with many agencies in providing eye examinations, medical and surgical care, eyeglasses, special school books, and other forms of assistance. The staff of the division gave assistance to more than 1,400 children dur-

<sup>139</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Department of Education: Survey of Special Education for Atypical Children, January 1, 1934, p. 7. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>140</sup> Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1932-34, pp. 142-189. U. S. Department of the Interior Bulletin 1935, No. 2. Washington, 1937.

<sup>141</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 69, secs. 26-28 as amended by Laws of 1935, ch. 286.

<sup>142</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, ch. 69, secs. 12-24.

<sup>143</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Annual Report of the Department of Education for the Year Ending November 30, 1934, p. 21.

ing 1934 and visited homes, schools, hospitals, and other organizations in the interest of these children.

As part of its preventive service the division of the blind had furthered the development of sight-saving classes in the schools and had supervised their work. Sight-saving classes were held for children whose vision could not be improved beyond 20/50 and for those whose visual defect was not greater than 20/200. In 1934, 39 such classes were held in 20 cities and towns and more than 500 children were enrolled in them. The State made a special grant of \$500 for each sight-saving class and also provided suitable reading material for children in towns that had no such class.

#### Deaf children.

Deaf children needing care in a boarding school had been placed by the department of education in four private schools using the oral method of instruction. One of those caring for a small number of Massachusetts children was in Connecticut. The cost of board and education in these schools ranged from \$600 to \$850 a year, but parents were expected, if financially able to do so, to reimburse the State for the cost of board in part or in full, the amount not to exceed \$6 a week.

The department is authorized upon agreement with the school committee of the city government to establish day classes in not more than six cities of the State in which there are 10 or more children needing special education.<sup>144</sup> For these classes the State pays the cost of instruction and transportation, and the city supplies a classroom, furniture, heat, and janitor service. Day-school classes were operating in four cities in 1934. Classes were held in the school buildings in which regular classes were held, so that the children had an opportunity to mingle with children of normal hearing in the academic program and in various school activities. However, this valuable experience was limited to the primary grades. No attempt had been made to continue the instruction of children in day classes beyond the fourth grade and sometimes the second or third grade. Upon completion of the work in the day classes, children were transferred to one of the boarding schools or to the Horace Mann school in Boston. Pupils from the Horace Mann school and from the boarding schools often went to high school or trade school, studying with children of normal hearing. The division of vocational education, through its bureau of rehabilitation, trained a few deaf pupils in trades.

During the special survey made in 1933 it was found that teachers of lip reading were employed by the school committees of 15 cities and towns to teach hard-of-hearing children in the public schools. For this work the teacher went from building to building, teaching groups of children for periods of 30 to 45 minutes, usually twice a week. Often children in several smaller schools met at centrally located buildings in certain parts of the city for these periods. In 1933, 1,212 children were receiving such instruction at an average cost of about \$23 per child, which was paid entirely by the cities and towns.<sup>145</sup>

<sup>144</sup> General Laws (Ter. Ed.) 1932, sec. 28.

<sup>145</sup> Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Department of Education: Survey of Special Education for Atypical Children, January 1, 1934, pp. 10-12. (Mimeographed.)

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